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No. 901

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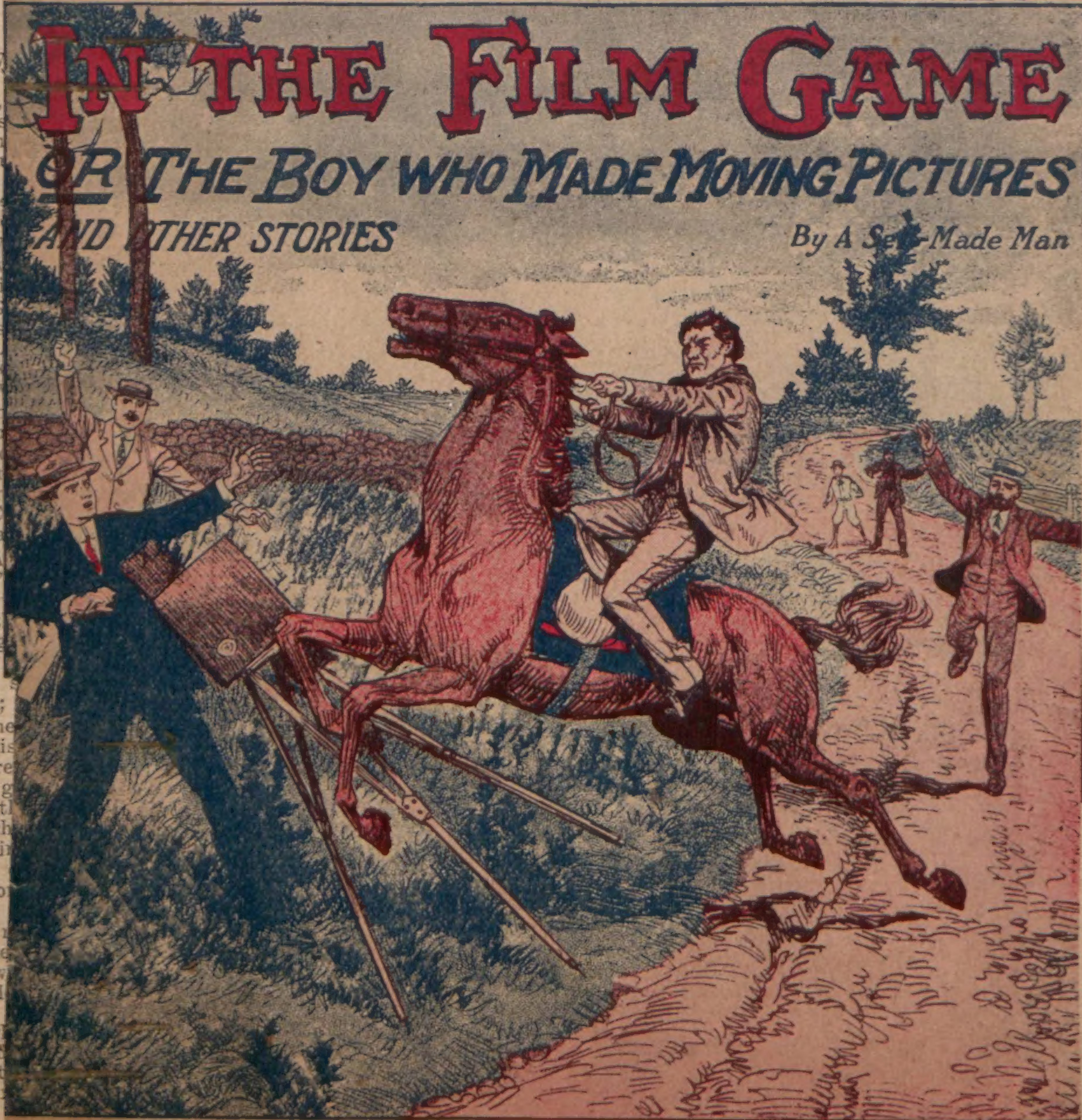
FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

IN THE FILM GAME

OR THE BOY WHO MADE MOVING PICTURES
AND OTHER STORIES

By A Self-Made Man



"Go!" shouted the director. The camera man began turning the handle, and Jack's horse suddenly leaped forward in a frenzied manner and dashed directly at the camera, smashing it. The beast had been stung by a dart from the blow-pipe of Jack's hidden enemy.

FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

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No. 901

NEW YORK, JANUARY 5, 1923

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IN THE FILM GAME

OR, THE BOY WHO MADE MOVING PICTURES

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.—A Rascally Act.

"What in thunder are yer roostin' up there for, you lazy rascal?" roared Farmer Whippletree, a sour-looking, raw-boned agriculturalist, whose sunburned face was shaded by a wide-brimmed straw hat of no particular color, striding up behind his young hired hand, whose name was Jack Case, and who was perched upon the fence which cut off the Whippletree farm from the country road.

"Watching the fun," replied the boy, without showing any fear of the man who controlled his services.

"Get back to work, confound yer! What d'ye s'pose I'm payin' yer fer, and grubbin' yer?"

"Let a fellow have a look. I'm ahead on my work."

"What yer lookin' at, anyway?" asked the farmer, his curiosity aroused by the actions of several people in the road, one of whom was standing a camera which was elevated on three spindle legs, and looked a bit different from Whippletree's preconceived ideas of the machine.

"Can't you see?" said Jack. "They're going to take a moving picture."

"A movin' picter? What yer mean by that?"

"I've seen one or two in a buildin' on a screen, and they cost me a nickel, and I dunno as 'twas worth it. What's that got to do with this here thing? There ain't no screen here, and this here is out of doors, on the public road."

"I said they are going to take a moving picture; that is, a scene for one."

The farmer removed his straw hat and scratched his ear. He didn't understand. But he was interested enough in the proceedings to see what was going to happen, and for the moment he forgot that his hired hand was wasting his time, which the farmer regarded as a crime against his interests. Under the shade of a big oak tree on the opposite side of the road stood a wagon and a team of horses. Besides the front seat there were two others in the vehicle. In the middle one were seated two good-looking women. Tied to the back of the wagon was a stalwart, finely built chestnut horse. In the road beside the camera was a well-dressed young man, who appeared to be directing the proceedings, a roughly-attired lad of Jack's age, and a smooth-faced man, with a long, black flowing wig, a sporty get-up and a brigandish-looking soft hat set rakishly on his head. Jack noticed that

the lad hung back near the led horse, and frequently took a swallow from a black bottle in a surreptitious way.

Coming down the road in front was a big farm wagon loaded with a piece of farm machinery. It had just come around a turn in the road, and the moving picture people were apparently waiting for it to pass by them. A farm lad was driving the team, and he appeared to be in no great hurry. Indeed, as it was a warm afternoon, he was half asleep on his perch. At this stage of the proceedings a newcomer came slinking down the lane from the farm-house. This was Noah Whippletree, the farmer's only son and heir. He was skinny and lanky like his father, and his face was not one that made him popular with the girls, nor with the boys of the neighborhood, either. His disposition went hand in hand with his face, one being a reflex of the other. He was mean, disagreeable and cruel. In his hand he carried a blow-pipe, and in his pocket was a bunch of small darts. For the past hour he had been amusing himself shooting the darts at the girls that came within range of his instrument of torture.

He hated Jack Case because the hired boy was his opposite in everything from looks to disposition and character. Jack had made himself popular with the girls and boys of the adjoining farms and the nearby village of Oldham from the start, and as Noah had no standing with the young people, which he knew, he soured on Jack very soon. He showed his personal resentment in every way he could, making things uncomfortable for Jack in a dozen ways. Jack went out of his way to try and smooth matters between them, for he realized the disadvantage he labored under in making an enemy of the farmer's son. Noah refused to be placated. Like oil and water, they wouldn't mix. Jack would have thrown up his job but for the fact that he had engaged to stay through the season, and the arrangement between him and the farmer was that he was to receive only \$1 a week until his time was up, when he would then receive in full all that was due him.

A clause in the agreement stipulated that if Jack quit for any reason whatever before the term of his engagement, he was to forfeit all that was coming to him up to that time. Whether such an agreement was binding in law Jack did not know, but when he signed his name to the paper he was on his uppers, and fully meant to stand by the terms of the contract.

He subsequently learned from his new friends around about that Farmer Whippetree was a very thrifty man, and had managed to save money in several cases by making things so hot for his hired hands as their term drew near its close, that the said hands had sacrificed their wages by running away. Jack determined not to be buncoed out of his money, and with that purpose in sight he put up with a lot of abuse from both the farmer, his wife and his son.

Noah had had a run-in with his father a short time before, which probably accounted for his sneaky approach to the road. He had noticed that something was going on, and that fact attracted him. He kept away from both his father and Jack, and to make sure that he wouldn't be sent back by his old man, he got behind the hedge that joined the fence. Finally the big farm wagon came up and passed by on its way toward the village. Then the moving picture got busy. The director issued his orders. The scene to be taken was the second section of the pursuit of the wagon by the lad on the chestnut horse. The actor in the brigandish hat was supposed to be abducting one of the girls with the help of the other. The boy was to ultimately rescue her after a long chase and a scrap with the man.

"Unhitch your horse," cried the director, as the chief actor climbed into the wagon.

The lad fumbled with the rope, and finally released the animal. The actor then drove the wagon down the road a little way to acquire the necessary headway. He was to drive just around the turn ahead and stop out of sight. When he had accomplished the three-quarters of the distance, the pursuer was to dash into range of the camera and go as far as the wagon. Then the party was to repeat the chase at another suitable point along the road.

The cameraman placed his machine in the proper position and laid his hand on the handle. The director, seeing that the actor in the wagon was ready to start, ordered the youth to get in position himself, ready to follow on signal. That lad, however, looked fishy about the eyes and wobbly about the legs. He made two abortive attempts to mount the horse.

"What's the matter with you, Smith?" roared the director.

"Noshing's the matter (hic) with me," replied Smith, making a third and desperate attempt to get on the horse.

He put too much effort in the act, and not only reached the saddle, but went flying over it. The result was a tumble. The shock sent the fumes of the liquor flying through his brain, and he made no effort to get up. The director walked over and looked at him. One look satisfied him that Smith was as drunk as an owl. What he said wouldn't look well in print.

He called the cameraman to help him get Smith on his pins, but the youth's legs gave way and wouldn't stand for their duty. Here was a pretty kettle of fish. The scene could not go on without Smith, and no substitute was at hand. What was to be done? The director was a quick thinker, and he decided to hire, if he could, the boy seated on the fence, who he saw was a farm hand, but a fine, intelligent looking one. He believed he could break the boy into the final

business of the film in short order, and until that time came all the lad had to do was to make the chase. Abandoning Smith in disgust, he went over to Jack.

"Can I hire you for the rest of the afternoon? I'll pay you \$3 for your services," he said.

"Ask Mr. Whippetree there. He's my boss," said Jack.

The director referred the request to the farmer.

"What do you want with him?" asked Whippetree, cautiously.

"I want him to take the place of that drunken fool yonder."

"What do you want him to do?"

"Ride that horse. You can ride, I suppose!" he said to Jack.

"Bet your life I can. I could ride him bare-back if you wanted me to," replied Jack.

"I'll explain what I want you to do, and you have only to follow my instructions to make the \$3."

"I reckon I'll make the \$3, or he don't take no hand in your business," said Whippetree.

"Well, I'll pay you," said the director.

"Produce, and you kin have the use of him till sundown," said the farmer.

The director handed the farmer the money and beckoned Jack to come down off the fence. The young farmhand was delighted at the idea of assisting in the production of a motion picture film, and joined him with alacrity. The director gave Jack his instructions for the next stage of the picture, and the boy readily understood what was expected of him. Telling him to mount, he signaled the impatient actor down the road to start. The cameraman became alert, and just before the wagon came rushing past he began turning the handle of his machine.

With a rush the horse and wagon sped by, the actor and actresses going through a strenuous pantomime, the fair prisoner making efforts to leap from the vehicle, and being held back by the other woman, while the actor lashed his horse at top speed. For fear of some miss on Jack's part, the director allowed the wagon to get around the turn before he started the new performer.

"Go"! shouted the director.

The cameraman began turning the handle, and Jack's horse suddenly leaped forward in a frenzied manner and dashed directly at the camera, knocking it down and smashing it to pieces. The beast had been stung by a dart from the blow-pipe of Jack's hidden enemy.

CHAPTER II.—Noah Gets a Part of What He Deserves.

As smart a rider as Jack was, he was nearly flung from the saddle, and to keep his seat he was forced to cling to the animal's neck like grim death. The horse, pained by the dart which stuck in his flesh, plunged about in a way most unusual with him. The director almost tore his hair over the destruction of the camera. Naturally, he blamed it all on Jack, and his inexperience as a rider. The smashing of the camera put an end to further work for the day, and that meant a considerable financial loss for the film making company.

"Whoa! whoa!" cried Jack, trying in vain to soothe the beast.

The director, fearing that the animal would bolt, as he seemed on the point of doing, which would add to the trouble, sprang forward and seized the bridle. The horse continued to prance around.

"Get down," cried the director to the boy.

Jack slipped out of the saddle. As he did so he heard a cackle of glee from the hedge. At the same time he saw the fuzzy head of the dart sticking in the animal's side near his hind quarters. He recognized it as one of Noah Whippletree's darts, and like a flash he understood the cause of it all.

"You're a pretty rider, you are," said the director. "Look at the damage you have done—smashed the camera and destroyed several hundred feet of film, besides spoiling the afternoon's work."

"Don't blame me, sir. Look here and see what was the cause of it."

He pointed at the head of the dart.

"What's that?" asked the director.

Jack pulled the dart out and showed it to him. The horse at once quieted down.

"How came that there?" cried the director.

"That drunken lout must have——"

"No, sir. He didn't do it. It was shot from a blow-pipe."

"A blow-pipe, eh? Who did such a rascally deed?"

"Look behind the hedge and you will see the boy who was guilty of it," said Jack, in a low tone.

The director began to have a glimmering of the facts. He was mad clear through. Turning around he looked at the hedge, but could see nothing. He understood, however, that the thick hedge could easily hide the miscreant.

"Take hold of the bridle and I'll have the villain if he's there," he said.

He made a spring at the hedge. A guilty conscience needs no accuser is an old aphorism, and when Noah saw him coming he jumped up and made a break for the house. This drew his father's attention to him for the first time.

"Noah!" he roared.

But Noah had definite reasons for not heeding his father's call. The director of the movies, now satisfied of the young rascal's guilt, sprang over the fence and rushed after him. It was a pretty chase while it lasted, but it didn't last long. Noah caught his foot in a hole and fell on his face. Before he could rise the angry director had him by the collar. If the man required any further evidence of the youth's guilt, he had it in the blow-pipe clutched in Noah's hand.

"You young rascal, I'll make you pay for what you did," he cried, furiously, yanking the boy on his feet.

"I didn't do nothin'," whined Noah, in abject fear, for he was both a physical and moral coward.

"No, of course you didn't, you young villain!"

"Here, what are you doin' to the boy?" cried Farmer Whippletree, coming up.

"I'm going to beat several kinds of sense into him," said the director.

"I guess not. He's is my son."

"He's your son, is he? I am glad to know it. I shall hold you responsible for the damage he has done."

"What damage has he done to yer? I hain't seen him do anythin'."

"Do you see that blow-pipe?"

"I'll allow I do."

"And these darts?" said the director, pulling several out of Noah's pocket.

"What about 'em?"

"He shot one of them into my horse just as your hired boy mounted him, and that set the animal off his perch, and caused all the damage you saw in the road."

"I reckon yer'll have to prove that," said the farmer, doggedly.

"The proof lies in the fact that he has the blow-pipe and darts in his possession, and that one of those darts was picked out of the horse's flank just now."

"Who says it was?" demanded the farmer.

"I say so, and your hired hand showed it to me sticking in the horse. He picked it out, so I have his evidence of the fact to back up my statement."

"Did you fire one of them things into that animal?" roared Mr. Whippletree to his son.

"I didn't mean to do it," whimpered Noah, with a vivid recollection of the licking his old man had handed him a short time before.

The look on his father's face foreshadowed another and worse hiding, and so Noah trembled all the way down to his shoes.

"Let go of him, mister, 'I'll 'tend to him," said the farmer.

The director, perceiving that the old man meant business, released Noah. Whippletree almost shook the breath out of his heir.

"So the lickin' I gave yer a while ago did yer no good, eh? This time I'll fan you good and proper with the cowhide."

Noah let out a roar in anticipation of what he saw coming his way.

"Shet up!—When I get through with yer, yer won't sit down for a week."

"Hold on," said the director as Mr. Whippletree started to drag his son away.

"What do yer want?" said the farmer, ungraciously.

"You own this farm, I suppose?"

"I do."

"Very good. Our lawyer will send you a bill for the damage your son has done, and if you don't pay it on demand our company will begin suit against you to recover the amount."

The farmer looked staggered. The director spoke like a man who meant business, and Whippletree had a vision of the cost of a new camera, the value of which he had no idea of.

"How much is it?" he asked, with a glare of rage at his son.

"I couldn't tell you now, but it will be considerable."

"Them photograph things don't cost so much."

"That's a motion picture machine, and is a great deal more expensive than a common camera. It was loaded with film, and that's worth money. Then our afternoon's work is practically spoiled. You will have to make good for the wages of the five people I brought along, and the hire of the team, besides other extras. It will cost you a

round sum, and you won't be able to get out of paying it."

"I'll pay what's right, but I won't stand for no bunco game," replied the farmer, aggressively.

"The lawyer will send you an itemized account, which you can verify before paying. We don't ask a cent more than the actual loss we have suffered. If you object to the bill, turn it over to a lawyer, and we'll adjust the matter with him. I shall keep this blow-pipe and these darts as evidence against your son in case we have to take the case into court. You have seen me take them from him, and you will be obliged to admit that in court if it gets that far. I have also the evidence of your farmhand. That's all. Now you can take your son away and teach him a lesson that he evidently needs badly."

The director returned to the road. Farmer Whippletree realized that he was up against it hard. He had a holy horror of the law, for he had always heard it was the worst thing to monkey with. A lawyer had told him once that even an unsatisfactory settlement of a case out of court was often to be preferred to a legal fight, since once you got involved in a lawsuit you never could tell when you were going to get out of it.

Whippletree also had told a remembrance of the story of the oyster and the two claimants who went to litigation over it. How in the end their lawyers divided the oyster, and all the contestants got was a shell apiece. All of these reflections, coupled with the large bill for damages he would have to face, doubly inflamed Whippletree against his precious son. He looked the personification of doubly distilled vengeance as he pushed his whimpering son ahead of him. He took the boy to the barn and, tying him to a post, got down his cowhide.

"I reckon you'll cut them darts and blow-pipe out after I get through with you, yer young skunk."

"Please don't kill me," sobbed Noah.

"This here is only the first installment," said his father, grimly. "When the bill comes in, and I have to pay it, yer'll get the rest, and yer'll get it good and hard. Yer'll think every bee in the hives put a sting into yer."

Then the farmer started in, and for several minutes Noah's screams and cries for mercy agitated the air of the barn. In the meantime, at the director's request, Jack rode forward to the turn in the road, where the actor and two actresses stood looking back and wondering what was wrong at the director's end, with orders for them to return.

"What was the trouble?" asked the brigandish performer.

Jack explained what had happened.

"The camera is smashed, you say?" said the man.

"Yes," replied Jack. "The horse put it out of business."

"Then we'll do no more work to-day, ladies," said the actor. "However, we are entitled to our pay just the same, so there is no danger that we don't eat to-night."

"You don't depend on your day's pay to eat, do you?" asked Jack, in some surprise.

"Sometimes we are hard pressed for the price,

The lot of a motion picture artist is not one of pampered luxury, unless you are a topnotcher and get big money right along."

"How much do you get?"

"From \$5 up a day."

"If you get it every day that isn't so bad."

"Unfortunately we don't work every day. If it's a cloudy day we can't do any outdoor work. In that case we may be called upon to work interiors in the studio, under electric lights."

"What kind of place is the studio?" asked Jack, with interest.

"It's a glass-covered room generally of some size, equipped with all manner of lighting apparatus. It is often divided into sections so that two or more scenes can be taken at the same time. The stage, where the work is done, is not elevated like the stage of the theater, but even, or nearly so, with the floor. The space within which the performers move is marked out in the shape of a triangle, with the apex at the camera, and the people employed in a scene must see that they do not step outside the set lines while the machine is in action, or they will get out of the picture."

"I should like to visit a studio," said Jack.

Outsiders, unknown to the management, are not welcome, for they are likely to be in the way," was the actor's final remark, as they drove up to the starting point, with Jack riding alongside the vehicle.

CHAPTER III.—Noah Decides to Run Away.

The cameraman had collected the ruins of his machine, and when the wagon came up he tossed it into the back of it. The young man whose place Jack had been called upon to take, with the disastrous results we have seen, was sleeping his jag off under the tree. The director intended to leave him there to sober up at his leisure. When he turned up at the studio he would learn he had been fired for good.

"Well, you've lost the chance to appear in an exciting film," said the director to Jack, "and you can blame it on the little rascal you are living with. That horse is a spirited animal, and had you not been accustomed to holding your seat on a horse, you might have broken your neck."

"Noah Whippletree wouldn't have gone in mourning if I had," said Jack. "He hates me to the full extent of his nature."

"Then he did that trick for your benefit more than for fun?"

"I judge he did. I am sorry I was the innocent cause of spoiling your afternoon's work."

"Never mind. It was not your fault, though I thought it was at first. We won't lose much over it, for Mr. Whippletree will have a stiff bill for damages to settle with the company."

"That will break his heart, for a dollar looks as big as a mountain to him. He will probably take satisfaction out of me."

"I guess not. He took his son to the barn to give him a good whipping."

"That won't make any difference. He'll blame me, too, though I don't expect he'll try to beat me. If he did there would be something doing, for I wouldn't stand for it."

"Why should you? Is he a hard man to work for?"

"I should remark that he is. I shall be glad when my time is up."

"When will that be?"

"On the first of November."

"You can quit any time, can't you?"

"Yes, but I'll sacrifice most of my wages."

"How is that?"

Jack explained the terms of his agreement with the farmer.

"I don't believe that agreement would hold water if you put your case in the hands of a lawyer. How came you to go to work on this farm? Is farming your regular business?"

"No. I never worked on a farm before I went to work for Mr. Whippletree."

"What induced you to take up with the job? It's pretty hard labor, I should judge."

"You bet it is. I get up at five and work through, with intermissions for meals, till nearly nine at night. Then I turn in, for I'm fagged out."

"How much are you paid?"

Jack told him.

"Little enough. You're a smart-looking, intelligent fellow, and could do much better. If you want to throw up your job I'll hire you as a useful hand around the studio. I want a fellow like you to take that drunken chap's place. As you say you're a good rider, you will be useful to us."

"I'd like to take you up, but there's three months' pay coming to me which I am likely to lose if I quit."

"I don't think so. If you want to take up with my offer I'll see our lawyer about making a demand on Whippletree for what is due you. If he won't pay, the lawyer will probably see his way to bringing suit in your name for the money."

"If I thought I'd win I'd leave the farm."

"Our studio is in Elyria, but we are going to put up at the village to-night; I expect to get a new camera by noon to-morrow and take the interrupted scenes in the afternoon. I shall need you to work the part I engaged you for, so you had better report at the hotel some time in the morning. As I am going to Elyria myself this evening, I will try and get legal advice on your case before I get back with the new camera to-morrow. Then I will be able to let you know how you stand with reference to your agreement. If you promise to be on hand I will see that you lose nothing by it," said the director, who had taken a shine to the boy.

"All right. It would suit me better to work for you than for Mr. Whippletree," said Jack, in a tone that showed he meant it.

"Very good," said the director. "Meet me at the hotel in the village after you've had your dinner, or, if it's more convenient to you, be down here along the road around one. We'll be along in the team about that time, and will stop here. Tell the farmer that I claim the use of your services to-morrow afternoon for the \$3 paid him. That will probably smooth your way."

"It may. At any rate, I'll tell him; but I'll come, anyway, whether he likes it or not."

"Then I'll look for you, so good-by till then."

The director got up on the front seat beside the

actor-driver, and the rig bowled away, with the chestnut horse trotting on behind. Jack returned to the job in the truck patch he had left on the appearance of the movie people in the road, and was busy at work when the tear-stained face of Noah Whippletree projected itself over the fence near him. Jack saw him, but pretended he didn't.

"I s'pose you're down on me, Jack Case?" said Noah, in a tone that caused Jack to stop work and look at him.

It was the nearest approach to friendliness that Noah had ever been guilty of toward the hired hand.

"If I am it's your fault. I've tried to be on good terms with you, but you wouldn't have it," replied Jack, wondering what was in the wind.

"I didn't like you because you got along with the boys and girls around here and I didn't."

"If you tried to be pleasant and sociable you might get on with them, too."

"I don't care. I ain't goin' to stay here."

"You aren't?" said Jack in surprise. "Going visiting?"

"No; I'm goin' to run away."

"You are?"

Noah nodded his head in a determined way.

"What put that idea in your head?"

"My old man licked me twice this afternoon, and he's promised me another. I won't stay and be treated like a dog. I told marm, and she said I got what I deserved. That settled it. I'm goin' away to-night, and I never mean to come back, never!"

"Your father will follow you and bring you back. Then he'll lay it onto you for leaving home on the sly."

"He won't catch me. I'll take care of that."

"Why are you telling me this?"

"Because I want you to know. You think I ain't got no backbone. I'm goin' to show you I have."

"I think you're foolish to talk about running away. You have a good home, and if you'd behave yourself you wouldn't have any trouble with your father."

"I'm goin' to get square with my old man for the two lickin's."

"And you're going to run yourself into a lot of trouble."

"What do you mean by trouble?"

"How do you expect to run away and get along without money?"

"You needn't worry about me. I'll get along all right," said Noah, meaningly.

"You've never been out in the world on your own hook. I have, and I know how tough it is. I was flat broke when I came to work on this farm. If your father hadn't taken me on I'd have had to beg a meal and a night's lodging along the road. You haven't any idea what that is. You've always had a bed and plenty to eat."

"Oh, I've got some money, and I'll be able to buy what I want."

"How long do you suppose your money will last? You'll have to look about for work, and you've never worked in your life."

"I can work if I have to."

"It's my opinion you'll soon get sick of run-

ning away, and will be glad to sneak back home and take your medicine."

"Here comes my old man. Now don't you give me away. If you do I'll never forgive you."

With those words the youth moved away. In a few minutes Farmer Whippletree came up to the fence and looked over into the truck patch.

"How long have you been back?" he said to Jack.

"Oh, some little time," answered the boy.

"What was Noah sayin' to yer?"

"He told me you whipped him twice this afternoon."

"Huh! It's a wonder he'd tell yer that. What else did he say?"

"He said he wasn't going to stand for any more of them."

"He said that, did he? Well, he's goin' to get another in a day or two, when that motion picture chap sends in his bill for damages. You kin quit that job now and come into the barn. I want yer to help me there."

Jack got up, climbed over the fence and followed the farmer to the barn.

CHAPTER IV.—The Flitting of Noah.

Jack worked in the barn until Mrs. Whippletree called him and her husband to supper. Noah had a peculiar look on his face when he came to the table. He also had his best clothes on. His father naturally noticed that fact.

"What are yer dressed up for?" he said, sharply.

"I'm goin' to a party," said his son, in a smothered tone.

"A party! Whereabouts? I hain't heard nothin' about it afore."

"Over on the Davis farm. One of the girls is havin' a birthday party."

"If yer goin' there to-night yer'll have to walk."

"I don't care if I do walk."

"Are you invited, too?" the farmer asked Jack.

"No, sir. I haven't heard anything about a party over at the Davis farm."

"Why didn't yer mention the matter afore?" said Whippletree to his son.

"I only got the invitation this afternoon."

"Huh!" ejaculated his father, applying himself to his supper.

No one wasted any time over a meal in the Whippletree household. Conversation to any great extent was rarely indulged in. The Whippletrees came to table to eat and not to talk. And when they were through eating they got up and went about other matters. On the present occasion Mrs. Whippletree, having noticed the frown which had enveloped her husband like an impalpable fog since his interview with the motion picture director, and which she knew was in some way connected with Noah, ventured to inquire into the cause of it at the table.

"Huh!" said her husband again, for he was in no humor to talk upon a sore subject.

"I don't see no need of you bein' so grumpy, Silas Whippletree," retorted his spouse, whose bump of curiosity was strongly developed.

"You'd be more than grumpy yourself if yer

was stuck for a heavy bill of damages on account of that young whelp there," said the farmer glaring across the table at his hopeful heir.

"For pity's sake!" ejaculated the lady. "What damages are you stuck for?"

"I dunno the amount, but by the way the man talked I guess it'll make a hole in my summer profits."

"Why should you have to pay any damages on Noah's account? What has the boy done?"

"He busted a movin' picture camera out in the road this afternoon, and sp'led the work of the people who were takin' the pictures. I've got to pay for the time they've lost, as well as for the camera and the stuff inside it, or stand a suit at law, which I reckon wouldn't do me no good."

"My goodness! How did it happen?"

Mr. Whippletree unbent so far as to briefly review the incident in question for the benefit of his conjugal partner.

"So that's why you gave Noah a second lickin' this afternoon?"

"Yes; and he'll get the other installment when the bill comes in. If it's bigger'n I expect, I won't leave any hide on him," glowered the farmer, whereat Noah instinctively winced, even though he was resolved to run away that night.

"I think you've whipped him enough, Silas," said his wife, feeling disposed to save her son from further castigation. "I don't s'pose the damage'll cost you more'n \$5."

"Five dollars!" roared Mr. Whippletree. "More like \$50."

Mrs. Whippletree gasped at that. Fifty dollars looked like a small fortune to her. Her husband was naturally a close man, and she had to use all kinds of expert tactics to separate him from enough money, in addition to what she made out of the sale of butter and eggs to the village store, to clothe her in a suitable manner. If her husband was mulcted to the extent of \$50 by the moving picture people she would never be able to get another cent from him that year. This was a prospective calamity that hit her in a weak spot. Her sympathy for her son evaporated, and she felt like giving him a beating on her own account.

"Surely it won't be as much as that?" she said.

Her husband made no reply. He had said all he was going to on the subject, and thereafter was as mute as a mopstick. The meal over, the farmer went to the barn, while Jack devoted himself to the customary evening chores. Noah went to his room and put in his time packing a small grip he had fished out of the attic. When he was done he pulled a big roll of bills out of his vest pocket and counted it over complacently. Considering the miserly character of his father, who dominated the purse strings, it was a lot more money than one would have expected to see in his possession. An eye witness, acquainted with the internal economy of the Whippletree family, would have wondered how he came by so much cash.

Noah didn't return it to his vest pocket, but after peeling off two or three bills, stuffed the rest down into the bottom of the grip. Then he opened his window and looked out. The night was a bright one, and he could easily see all

within his range of vision. His room overlooked the side of the house facing the head of the lane. A flower bed, in which his mother took some pride, lay underneath. Finding the coast apparently clear, Noah tied the grip to a piece of string and lowered it into the flower bed, where it lighted on and crushed one of his mother's choicest plants, recently presented to her by a neighbor.

Closing the window, the lad went downstairs and announced to his mother in the living room that he was going to start for the party he had mentioned.

"What time do you expect to get home?" she asked, in no agreeable tone, for she felt sour toward him. "If I was your father I wouldn't let you go after what you done."

"Didn't he whale the back off me?" replied the boy, doggedly.

"It wasn't any more than you deserved."

"You used to take my part, but now you've gone back on me."

"If your father has to pay \$50 on your account, I haven't any sympathy for you. Fifty dollars is a mint of money to me."

"Oh, dad has plenty money in the house. You're always howlin' about hein' hard-up. If I was in your shoes and he wouldn't give me what I wanted, I'd take it," said Noah.

This was a new kind of speech for the lad to make, and his mother looked up a bit startled at the suggestion of taking any of her husband's money without his permission. She was too well broken to harness to do such a thing.

"How dare you say such a thing as that, Noah Whippetree?" she said, angrily.

"You needn't get mad. I said it for your own good. You don't have to do it if you don't want to. Well, I'm goin'."

Noah walked out of the room and slipped out into the yard. He saw his father locking up the barn, and he took advantage of his back being turned toward him to whip around the corner of the house. As soon as the farmer entered the house, Noah stepped into the flower bed, with entire disregard for the plants in his path, picked up his grip, detached the string, and started for the gate of the lane.

Reaching the road, he started off in the direction opposite to the village. At that early stage of the game running away appeared like an exciting and interesting event to him. He didn't know that all his troubles lay before him. Jack didn't really believe that Noah intended to carry out his self-expressed program. He had an idea the youth was just blowing off so much wind. It seemed ridiculous to him that a boy with a home, and the prospects of one day owning it, would run away just because he had received a couple of good whippings, which he undoubtedly deserved. When Noah said at the supper table that he had been invited to a birthday party at the Davis farm, he didn't believe it. Noah wasn't in the habit of receiving special invitations from any source, though when parties were given at the neighboring farm-houses he was not slighted, even though his presence was not regarded as particularly desirable.

Jack suspected that Noah was bound for the old mill down the road where he was accustomed

to meet a number of cronies whose sole aim in life was to plot mischief. So the hired hand thought no more about the matter, and went to bed at his usual hour. Jack was called by Whippetree at the usual hour, and he got up and attended to the morning chores. Breakfast was ready at seven. Noah did not always get up till breakfast was over, when he ate what his mother saved for him. His absence this morning therefore passed unnoticed, as it was understood by his parents that he had been absent until a late hour at the Davis party.

It happened, however, that one of the Davis boys called before breakfast was over on an errand for his father. He was invited in to take a cup of coffee, which he accepted.

"I understand you had a party at your home last night," said Whippetree.

"Not that I heard of," replied Dick Davis in some surprise. "Who told you that?"

"Noah told us. He went off about eight o'clock to attend it."

"He was fooling you. We didn't have any party. If we had one I would have invited Jack as well as Noah."

"So," growled Whippetree pere. "Noah has taken to lyin', has he? I reckon I'll have some-thing to say to him when he gits up. The fannin' I gave him yesterday doesn't appear to have made the proper impression on him. He is hankerin' after another lickin'. Ever since school closed for the summer he's been givin' me trouble. Well, I'll cure him or he won't have no hide left on him."

The farmer got up and went out to get the implements Dick Davis came over to borrow, while Jack was sent to the well by Mrs. Whippetree for a pail or two of water. Dick met Jack at the well.

"So Noah told his folks there was a party at our place last night, eh?" said Dick.

"He did."

"That was an excuse to go somewhere, I suppose?"

"Must have been, unless he has really run away."

"Run away!" cried Dick, in surprise. "What did he want to run away for?"

Jack told him about the whippings Noah got, and explained why he received the last one.

"Served him right," said Dick. "Do you really think he's run away?"

"No, I don't believe he was such a fool. Where would he run to?"

"He might have gone to some fellow's house in the village as a bluff."

"If he did he'll get another warming when he comes back."

"His father and mother think he's in bed."

"He might be, but I wouldn't be surprised if he wasn't. If he's putting up a bluff he might stay away for a couple of days. He'll find his bluff won't work for a cent. He ought to know his father by this time. The old man means business every time."

"Well, I must be going. Good-by. Come over Sunday."

When Jack carried the second pail of water into the kitchen Mrs. Whippetree was not there.

She came in from a trip upstairs presently looking a bit excited.

"Where's my husband?" she said.

"At the barn."

"Go and tell him that Noah ain't in the house, and hasn't been home all night."

Jack hastened to carry the message to the farmer.

"What's that? Noah hain't been home all night," said Mr. Whippletree.

"That's what your wife told me to tell you," replied Jack.

The farmer made a bee-line for the house. Jack followed, impressed with the suspicion that Noah had really made good his treat to run away, though satisfied he would regret it. Farmer Whippletree heard his wife's statement again first hand, rushed up to his son's room to verify it, which seemed like casting a reflection on his wife's veracity, but that was the farmer's way, and came back to the kitchen as mad as a hornet.

"What business has he to stay out all night?" he roared. "Where did he go? There warn't no party at the Davis place. That showed he lied to get away. Wait till I get my hands on him."

Jack would have felt sorry for Noah had he turned up at that moment. He certainly would have caught it hot and heavy. The farmhand was now sure Noah had skipped according to his program, but though it might have been his duty to tell the farmer, he refrained out of sympathy for the son of the house, though Noah had never been a friend of his. So he kept silence while Mr. Whippletree raved over his son's delinquency, and in a few minutes accompanied the irate agriculturist out into one of the fields to start his day's work.

CHAPTER V.—Jack Leaves the Farm.

At noon Mrs. Whippletree blew the horn for them to come to dinner. Standing in the yard was the rig of a man from Elyria who had called to collect an installment on a machine he had sold Mr. Whippletree. The farmer had been expecting him and had drawn the money from the bank two days before to pay the bill.

"Howdy-do, Mr. Martin, I've been lookin' for you to call," said Mr. Whippletree. "Step in and have dinner with us."

"Thank you, Mr. Whippletree, don't mind if I do," said the man, who expected the invitation.

The farmer and Jack washed up, and the three went to the table where Mrs. Whippletree had already placed an extra plate for their guest. There was no lack of conversation on this occasion; that is, between the farmer and the fan from Elyria. It was confined chiefly to "shop"; that is, about expected crops and other topics connected with farming. The visitor, however, volunteered much city news that was welcome to his host and wife. He also made himself solid with Mrs. Whippletree by presenting her with a late copy of a fashion magazine, and the catalogue of a department store that did a mail order business with country people. The dinner finally came to an end, and the farmer went upstairs to get the money he had locked in his bureau

drawer. Jack had just brought in a pail of water for the lady of the house, when Mr. Whippletree came tearing into the room like a wild man, to the great astonishment of those present. In his hand he waved a piece of paper, and his face was the picture of concentrated fury.

"For heaven's sake, Silas, what's the matter?" gasped his wife.

"What's wrong, neighbor?" asked the visitor.

"The infernal whelp!" howled the farmer. "To think he would dare rob me, his father!"

"Sakes alive, Silas! What are you talkin' about?"

"Talkin' about!" roared Whippletree. "Do you know what Noah has done?"

"How should I?"

"He has robbed me of the money I drew from the bank to pay Mr. Martin, and has run away."

"Run away! Noah!" screamed Mrs. Whippletree.

"Read that paper if you don't believe it."

The lady, however, was too frustrated to read anything at that moment, even, if it had been printed in big type, and the paper was merely a rough scrawl in Noah's handwriting, which briefly set forth the two important facts:

"To Dad and Marm: I've run away from home for good, 'cause I'm tired of bein' knocked around, and I've taken the money in this drawer. Good-by forever. "Noah."

Mrs. Whippletree took the paper and gazed at the writing in a dazed way.

"You don't mean he really has run away?" she said, with quivering lips, her motherly instincts coming to the front.

"I don't mean nothin' else. He says so in that paper, and he says he's taken the money. As the money is gone, every cent of it, there can't be any doubt about the matter. To think we should have brought sich a viper into the world," said the farmer.

Jack gasped when he realized that Noah had pinched a wad of money from his father, and he blamed himself for helping the fugitive with his silence. It was too late now for him to say anything. Had he opened his mouth on the subject the farmer would have jumped on his neck like a carload of bricks. There was excitement to burn in the room for a while. The visitor said that under the circumstances he would let the matter go for a week or two and call again.

Mr. Whippletree accepted that arrangement, and then said he was going to pursue his son and fetch him back if it took him a week.

"Where do you suppose he went?" asked his wife, after the visitor had gone.

"To Elyria, or maybe to Clayton," he said.

Elyria was a city of some size to the West, while Clayton was a big town in the opposite direction. Noah had gone to the latter place as he did not want to pass through the village, where he stood a chance of being recognized, which would have furnished a clue to the direction he was taking. As the farmer believed his son was more likely to be attracted to a city than a town, with the money he had in his possession, he harnessed up his light wagon and started off that way, hoping to pick up some news in the village that would put him on Noah's track.

It was not until after he had started that Jack recalled his engagement with the moving picture director. He told Mrs. Whippetree that the farm would be minus his services that afternoon, as her husband had rented him to the motion picture people the previous day, and as the smashing of the camera had prevented them availing themselves of his services, they expected to use him that day. The lady made a protest, but it didn't go with the boy, who walked down to the road in time to see the team he expected coming along.

"You're on hand, I see," said the director. "Well, I have good news for you. Our lawyer expresses the opinion that Whippetree can't hold back what he owes you if you want to leave him. He can sue you, however, for any reasonable damages that he can prove to have suffered through the breaking of the contract by you. If you have a good defence you will win out. Should he decide to do that he can pay the money he owes you into the court instead of to you on the ground that as you are not a real resident of the county, he might not be able to recover any damages that the jury might award him. That would tie your wages up until the case was decided one way or the other. If you enlist with us I will pay you \$10 a week, and in addition to that, advance you half of what the farmer owes you."

"I'll take your offer," said Jack, promptly.

"All right. After we have taken the pictures you can return here, tell the farmer you are going to leave, make a demand on him for your wages, which you probably won't get, pack your trunk or grip and follow us to Elyria. Here is \$10 on account."

Jack took the money, and then received his instructions of the day before over again. We will not follow him through his afternoon's experience. It is enough to say that he performed his part to the satisfaction of the director, and there was no need to go over any scene again on his account. At five o'clock he parted with his new boss at the Whippetree lane and went to the farm-house to have it out with the farmer if he had got back from the pursuit of his son. He found Mrs. Whippetree beginning the preparations for supper. She was not in good humor, as might be expected. Her husband had not got back, though she looked for him at any time. Jack said nothing to her about his intention of leaving the farm, and proceeded to the field to do a couple of hours' work. At seven he was called to supper.

As the farmer was in the town of Clinton, half way to Elyria, at that moment, while Noah was seated on the veranda of a cheap hotel at Clayton, in the opposite direction, he was hardly likely to get his deserts as soon as his mother expected. Jack could not very well shake the farm till he had seen Mr. Whippetree, so after supper he performed the usual chores and waited impatiently for the farmer to return. This he failed to do till close on the midnight, by which time the boy was in bed and asleep. Mr. Whippetree had failed to find the slightest clue to his son along the road to Elyria, so he was forced to the conclusion that Noah had gone to Clayton. He returned home in a mighty bad

humor, and it was just as well that Jack did not see him. Whippetree ate his supper in Clinton, and from that place telegraphed the Elyria-police to arrest his son on sight, giving a brief description of the lad. After breakfast next morning Jack told the farmer that he was going to quit the farm, as he had been offered a better job with the moving picture people. He concluded by asking for his money. Whippetree stormed at Jack, for even suggesting that he wanted to leave, and told him he would forfeit what was coming to him if he left him in the middle of the season. Jack told him that he had legal advice on the subject, and would bring suit for his money. The upshot of the matter was that Jack packed his grip and left without his money.

CHAPTER VI.—Jack Joins the Globe Film Manufacturing Company.

Jack walked to the village, where he took the bus that met the mail trains going either east or west from a town three miles away. In less than an hour after boarding the train he reached Elyria. He had the address of a boarding-house the director, whose name, by the way, was Nash, had given him, and the address of the studio. He found his way to the boarding-house first, and engaged room and board by the week. He learned that the cameraman, Thompson by name, lived there, and he told the landlady he was coming.

He got his lunch and then started for the studio. It was a large, one-story building, on the corner of two streets, on the outskirts of the city. It was originally built for, and used as, a riding academy. After that it was turned into a hall for roller skaters. It was put to sundry uses, and finally came into possession of the moving picture concern which put in two sectional glass roofs, similar to the kind found in a photograph gallery, only larger. All the other necessary fixings in the way of artificial lighting, scenery for interiors, a developing room, etc., were duly provided, and the making of films became a steady industry there. The company, however, was only a small one in comparison with others in the trade, and was not affiliated with the moving picture trust. At the time of which we write, the independent concerns were struggling for recognition, and their road was not as smooth then as it has since become.

The film business was, practically controlled by a number of big companies, acting in combination, and asserting a monopoly to every place in sight. The Globe Film Manufacturing Company was the name of the particular company Jack had secured employment with, and he found the name in small letters above the word "Laboratory" on the entrance door at the corner. Jack opened the door and walked in. There was no bar to admission to the place, but a person who had no business there was soon invited to step out. Jack was waylaid in the ante-room, and asked his errand.

"I called to see Mr. Nash," he said.

"He's busy just now directing the taking of a scene."

"When will he be at liberty?"

"Not for some time, I guess."

"Can I see Mr. Thompson, then?"

"No. He's busy, too."

"Will you take my name in to Mr. Nash?"

"Yes, I'll do that."

"Tell him Jack Case has arrived from the farm."

The young man walked off back somewhere, and Jack waited for him to return. In a few minutes Jack was invited inside, where he got his first view of a photo-play in the course of production. It was a one-reel piece embodying eighteen to twenty scenes of pictures. A third of these were out-of-door views, and had already been taken without reference to their continuity or place in the plot or story. The interior scenes were now under consideration. Three of them represented the same parlor, and though when the reel was shown to the public they would appear as scenes two, eight and sixteen, the action connected with them were photographed in succession, to save the work of setting up the scenery three times.

Jack learned later that each scene was carefully rehearsed beforehand by the director until the performers had the business down to his satisfaction. Our hero recognized the two actresses and the brigandish actor among those engaged, although the latter looked very different in a swell evening suit, and without the heavily corked eyebrows he had worn on the road. Not till the scene underway was over was Jack noticed by the director, and then he spoke to him and asked him if he was ready to go to work. The boy said he was.

"How did you part with Whippetree? Kind of scrappy, I suppose?" he said with a smile.

"Well, our interview wasn't a love-feast," grinned Jack. "The occasion was rather unpropitious for me, as Whippetree was in a stew over his son. You see he whaled the boy for firing the dart into the horse, not so much on account of the act as because it laid him open to your bill for damages, and promised him a second licking when the bill came in. As a result, Noah Whippetree got desperate and ran away."

Jack told him the whole story, and Director Nash said Noah Whippetree had proved an expensive factor to his father's affairs. The cameraman, who had retired to make a test of the strip of film just taken, called Nash into the dark room to show him how it showed up. This is always done before any other scene is taken, so that the scene can be taken over again if, for any reason, the film is not satisfactory.

It may be that some piece of "business" has gone wrong, or a situation is not effective. Or perhaps an actor should have "come on" with his hat, or forgot that he was munching a sandwich and walked on with it in his hand. Sins or omission and commission like the foregoing are sufficient to spoil a whole scene, and it has to be done again at a cost of time, labor and money. It is the director's place to see that such lapses do not happen, but his watchful eye may be for a moment diverted from the business in hand just when it is most needed to catch some little slip, and there you are.

Such slips hardly ever escaped Mr. Nash's eye.

He was keenly alert always, for he knew vigilance is the price of success. The results that subsequently came to Jack in the film game were largely due to the chances he had in observing how Nash went about his business, and making mental note of the same. Nash was really the man in control of the Globe Film Manufacturing Company. His money had helped to finance it, and his ability as a producer kept the company afloat. He was not only the stage director, but at the start he was scenario writer and editor as well.

Now a dozen or more so-called scenarios, and a few that were the real thing, reached the office every day by mail. He was quick to sift out the wheat from the chaff. The latter were quickly returned to the writers, even when the necessary stamps were not enclosed, for he felt a certain sympathy for the unsuccessful aspirants, though, we believe, this sympathy does not extend to the studio critics of present time producers, any more than it dwells in the hearts of the magazine editors who are always howling at the dearth of acceptable short stories. Nash didn't care whether the scenario writer who honored his company with his ideas had a reputation in that line or not if he produced the "goods."

Nowadays the big companies have editors and scenario writers on the pay-roll to go over the manuscript sent in in shoals, and also to supply the right stuff in an emergency, which, somehow or another, always seems to exist. As long as Jack was associated with Director Nash he never knew when that gentlemen wasn't very busy.

The newcomer was put to work about the studio. His province was to help everybody who needed his assistance. He found in a day or two that he was required to "come on" in a scene as part of a crowd, or to enact some small part within his abilities. In a word, he was expected to be generally useful, and was here, there and everywhere as occasion demanded. When the company's lawyer sent a clerk to Farmer Whippetree with the bill for damages, he also carried a letter demanding the pay due Jack. This the farmer refused to pay, claiming, with some justice, that the boy's defection in the busy season caused him considerable loss, since he had not been able to fill his place, and, in any event, he would have to pay his successor larger wages, which was true enough.

Whippetree, in spite of his horror of a lawsuit, declared he would stand one in Jack's case. So suit was begun against him in Jack's name, and the farmer turned the papers over to the principal village lawyer, who put in the answer, and the case was put on the docket of the circuit court at the country seat, and would come up for trial in the course of time. And we may incidentally remark here that up to this time Noah Whippetree succeeded in eluding all efforts on the part of his father to find him. His mother looked to see him turn up at any time, but as Noah did not expect to find the fatted calf awaiting his return, but rather a stout ravenhide, and as his stolen funds hung out bravely, he was still among the missing. When he hit the seamy side of his folly he probably would repent, and open negotiations from a distance.

with his mother to soften the old man's vengeance.

CHAPTER VII.—A Rascally Piece of Work.

Jack found his new job much preferable to farmwork. He didn't have to turn out early in the morning to feed live-stock and help do the milking. Neither did he have to labor all day long in the hot sun, and then turn in after supper to do a lot of chores that he did not finish much before half-past eight, and then it was almost time to turn into bed. Besides, he received more pay. On the whole, he found his new work interesting. He learned something new about the moving picture industry every day, and the more he learned the better he liked it. He and Thompson, the cameraman, kind of chummed together, and Thompson put him wise to all the secrets of the trade.

"The motion picture business is only in its infancy," said the cameraman. "Take it from me, Jack, it's going to revolutionize the amusement world. The cost of living has gone up so high that the average public are looking for entertainment on a cheap basis. The movies are already catching them. Motion picture houses are opening up all over the country, and the people are flocking into them like ducks into a pond."

"Yes, I know," said Jack. "They are going to put a lot of actors out of work, don't you think? I've heard that more than half of the traveling repertoire companies have gone out of business."

"As new film manufacturing companies are starting up all the while, they offer openings to capable unemployed professionals. In the past actors who worked forty weeks steady each year, and got their money, have been considered fortunate, as a rule. The majority of them were continually on the move, seldom remaining more than a week in one place. That meant they were deprived of the comforts of a real home. They flitted from one boarding-house to another, or were up against the nomadic life of cheap hotels. The motion picture business offers them steady employment all the year round in one place. That's the advantage they will appreciate. Then if they make a hit in the film game they will earn more money. So you see they should benefit all around."

Jack had been less than a week with the Globe Film Company when he encountered the young man whose job he had taken. This chap's name was Henry Fallon, and he was called Hen for short. On the occasion of his disgrace he had slumped well into the night under the tree on the road in front of the Whippetree farm. He made his way back to the hotel in the village where Director Nash had put his people up over night. The inn was open when he got there, but the proprietor had no orders to provide for him. He recognized him as being connected with the party, and thinking the young fellow had been overlooked by accident, gave him a room and breakfast in the morning. Then Fallon learned from the cameraman that he had been bounced. He didn't take kindly to this information, and hung around until Mr. Nash returned with a new camera from Elyria. The interview between them was short and sweet. Hen got his transpor-

tation back to the city, and was told to hunt up employment elsewhere.

Fallon returned to Elyria in a bad frame of mind. He resented his discharge without considering its justness. He was one of those kind of people who harbor revenge for a real or fancied injury. Therefore he determined to get square with the Globe Company. And in getting square with the company he would put it over Nash, who had bounced him so summarily, for he knew Nash was the boss of the company. His associates were the frequenters of a saloon not far from the laboratory. That is where he had been in the habit of spending the larger part of his wages since he came to the city. As he had been a good customer, the proprietor was friendly toward him. Consequently when his money gave out which it did in a day or two, he got credit across the bar.

He did not tell the saloon owner that he had lost his job. He accounted for the extra time he now spent in the bar-room by saying he had been laid off for a week owing to internal injury. The proprietor believed and sympathized with him, and allowed him to roost in his barn. Hen told the truth to a couple of his boon friends, and they agreed that he had not been fairly treated. He hinted that he intended to get square with the movie people, and they said he would be justified in hitting back. Thus encouraged, he set to work to think up some scheme of retaliation. While thus engaged he found out who his successor was. He hung around till he met Jack going out to his dinner. He stopped him.

"You're the fellow who's taken my job," he said in a nasty, belligerent tone.

"What about it?" said Jack, who recognized him.

"There's this much about it. I'm not going to stand for it."

"I'm sorry, but I don't see what you have to do about it."

"Oh, you don't, eh?"

"No, I don't," replied Jack, not at all frightened by his predecessor's ugly looks and manner. "You were discharged, weren't you?"

"S'pose I was; if you hadn't butted in I'd have got taken on again."

"Don't you fool yourself with such an idea. You were discharged for getting drunk when your services were urgently needed. Mr. Nash isn't the kind of man to overlook such a thing as that. It wasn't your first offence, either. The director won't have unreliable people about the laboratory. It doesn't pay."

"Is that so?" sneered Fallon.

"You've found it so, haven't you?"

"I ain't going to put up with no such treatment. I'm going to get square."

"With Mr. Nash?"

"With the whole shooting match, including you."

"You're talking rag-time."

"I'll let you see if I am. Take that."

He shot out his fist at Jack's face. As the boy was looking for something of the kind, and was on his guard, he side-stepped and avoided the blow.

"Don't try that again or you'll regret it," said Jack, resolutely.

Fallon did try it again, with more vigor than

before. Jack warded off his fist and handed him one on the jaw that sent him staggering back. With a yell of anger Hen rushed at Jack. A mix-up followed, ending in Hen's overthrow with a knockout blow. Jack left him on the ground and continued on to dinner, or rather lunch, at the boarding-house a few blocks away. Fallon was helped on his feet by a spectator, and retreated to the saloon to figure out revenge, not only on Jack, but the laboratory as well.

"I heard you had a scrap with Henry Fallon, the chap I fired and whose place you are filling," said Director Nash to Jack soon after the boy got back.

"That's right. He forced a fight on me, and I gave him all he wanted."

"You must be a good one, for Fallon has the reputation of being something of a fighter."

"I can protect myself."

"He started the trouble, then?"

"Yes. He accused me of butting into his job. He said if I hadn't taken it he would have got it back."

"He hadn't the faintest chance of being taken on again. I have no use for persons of his stamp."

"I practically told him that, and he said he was going to get square with the whole shooting match, meaning the laboratory, I judge, and myself."

"He said that, did he?"

"He did."

"Then I think he'll bear watching. I'll put the officer on this beat on to him, with orders to arrest him if he tries to do any damage. When a man gets down to threats, the jail is a good place for him to cool off in," said the director, walking off.

Next day was Saturday, and Jack was called on to help the carpenter build a scene that was wanted right away. While they were at work on it the company rehearsed the scene. It was put in position for the scene painter to go to work on it. Jack was employed putting a coat of size on the canvas parts. This was the necessary ground work for the artist to lay his colors on. The boy finished his work about supper time, then he washed up and left the building. The sizing would dry overnight, and the artist expected to begin painting in the morning, so as to have a set ready for the performers on Monday. The night watchman came on duty about the time Jack was ready to go, and he was the only one in the building when the boy took his departure. After dinner, when Jack went to his room, he remembered that he had forgotten to bring a book on the moving picture business which the director had loaned him to read, so as the laboratory was only a few blocks away, he decided to go there and get it. So he started off on his errand. He went to the front door and knocked for the watchman. The man did not respond, so Jack guessed he was somewhere in the back of the building going his rounds. He waited ten minutes, and knocked again. Still no attention was paid to him. As there was a vacant lot on one side of the building, which extended around to the back, Jack started for the rear to see if he could attract the watchman's attention from that point. There were windows

high from the ground along the side, and from the last one Jack saw a flickering light.

He figured that it was from the watchman's lantern. When he turned the corner at the back he saw more light from the first two windows, one of which he noticed was completely broken. This of itself was odd, for he was willing to swear it was not broken when he went home, for he had been working in that end of the building. But that wasn't the only thing that attracted his attention. Right under the broken window was a long piece of plank, which, on closer inspection, proved to be provided with cleats a foot apart, so that a person could easily mount it. That with the broken window aroused Jack's suspicions that all was not right. He immediately mounted the cleated plank and looked in through the window. He gave a gasp when he saw Hen Fallon and another young chap inside busily engaged preparing to start a good-sized fire, which, if it once got started, would surely destroy the building and all it contained. The pieces of scenery which Jack and the carpenter had prepared that afternoon, and which Jack had sized before going away, and left standing along the wall, had been piled together in the middle of the floor, and the two rascals were making kindling out of some wood to pile on the paper they had placed under the scenery.

Jack saw that the window had not been broken, as he supposed, but jimmied out and laid on the edge of the roof. How the young villains had managed to do it without attracting the attention of the watchman surprised Jack. They went about their dastardly work with the sangfroid of people who were not expecting to be interfered with, from which fact Jack guessed that they had, after securing an entrance, captured and bound the watchman. He was an old man and no match for the two young fellows, though it was true that he was provided with a revolver. Without doubt they had caught him off his guard and put him out of business.

"Great Scott!" muttered Jack, "the scoundrels intend to set the laboratory on fire. I'll have to put a spoke in their wheel somehow. No use running for the cop on the beat. There isn't time, and I wouldn't know where to find him, anyway. There isn't a soul around here that I can call on to help me. I'll have to depend on myself, and if I'm going to put a stop to this business, I'll have to do it mighty quick."

The question was just how he was going to stop it.

CHAPTER VIII.—Jack Saves the Laboratory.

"I must get in through this window," said Jack. "I can't do that without making noise enough to attract their notice. As I must go in backward, they'll have me at a disadvantage, and the pair of them will be able to do me up."

Jack thought of yelling at them with the view of frightening them, but if he succeeded they would get away by way of the front door, and he would have no evidence against them. The crime they were engaged in was such a serious one that Jack was anxious to capture Fallon, at any rate, and hand him over to the police.

"That ain't enough wood. Go and get some more of it," Fallon said to his companion in guilt. "We want to make a sure thing of this job."

"Sprinkle some turps over it and it'll go," said the other.

"We'll do that, too," said Fallon. "There's some wood yonder. Go and get it."

As the other chap started to do as he was told, the thought occurred to Jack that there was a skylight in the office facing the street, and that he might be able to get in through that. With great caution he pulled himself up on the roof, removed his shoes, and hastened forward. What he feared was that the skylight was fastened on the inside. This he found to be so when he reached the skylight and attempted to raise it. It was hinged on one side and held by a stout hook on the other. Jack saw he was blocked. But he was a quick thinker, and his disappointment gave way to hope when it occurred to him to pull out his knife, dig away the dry putty from one of the half diamond-shaped panes, and by removing the glass, reach the hook. No sooner thought of than he proceeded to put the idea into execution.

He could do the job with little noise, and the two rascals were too far away to hear him. He had to work quick, and he did. The putty was crumbly on account of having been exposed so long to the weather, and he made rapid progress. After removing the putty, he bent back most of the glazier's metal tacks and pried up the glass. Leaving it on the roof he inserted his hand and detached the hook. To turn the skylight back was now but the work of a moment. Striking a match, he flashed it down into the office. A tall desk stood directly underneath. It was a simple matter for an athletic young fellow like Jack to lower himself through the opening and reach the top of the desk. In another moment he stood in the office. Flashing another match, he looked around to see if he could catch sight of the night watchman. He was not there. Going into the open space outside the partition, he struck a third match. There lay the watchman, bound hand and foot, and gagged with his own handkerchief. Jack bent over him and found the man's eyes staring into his. The old man recognized Jack, and struggled to show how helpless he was.

"Hush! Make no noise. The chaps who fixed you this way are at the back preparing to set the laboratory on fire. I'll have you free in a twinkling," said the boy.

In less than a minute the watchman was free of his bonds and on his feet.

"Where's your revolver?" asked Jack.

"They took it from me," replied the watchman.

"That makes one of them more dangerous. You recognized one of them as Fallon, didn't you?"

"No. Both had their faces covered with handkerchiefs. Is one of them Fallon? It doesn't seem possible he would engage in such a job as this."

"I saw them through one of the back windows. They had the handkerchiefs off their faces, so I got a full view of their countenances. One is Fallon. He told me the other day he intended

to get square with the company, and this is the way he is trying to do it. You must help me catch them."

"We may get shot."

"That's a chance we've got to take. It is your duty to protect the laboratory at night. That is what you are hired for. With me to help you we ought to get the villains and have an example made of them. Come on."

"What are you going to do?"

"Come into the office and see if we can find something that'll answer for a weapon."

In a closet were a number of articles which had been used as "props" in films already turned out. One was an Indian club, another was a wooden mace, a third was a battleaxe, the wooden blade covered with tin foil. There were also several long spears, imitation, of course. Jack selected the club and mace as handiest to use. He handed the latter to the watchman.

"Now then, we'll take them by surprise and knock them over before the chap with the revolver can use it on us. Follow me."

The watchman was told to take off his shoes, and then they started for the rear of the building. Suddenly there was a blaze of light from the back part of the laboratory.

"Quick!" cried Jack. "They've started their bonfire."

They hurried forward. The glare of the spreading blaze lighted the back room up with a ruddy tinge. As Jack dashed into the place, followed by the watchman, Fallon was in the act of climbing up to the open window to make his escape, while his companion was following behind him. With a yell Jack dashed upon them. He swung his club and knocked Fallon's accomplice senseless. Fallon, with an imprecation, reached for the revolver that stuck out of his hip pocket. Jack had no mind to let him use it. He hit Fallon's arm an awful blow, and the young man uttered a howl of pain. A second swinging blow on the leg brought him tumbling to the ground in a heap. Jack jumped on him and held him down.

"Get that fire-extinguisher and turn it on the fire before it gets beyond control," shouted the boy to the watchman.

The old man hurried to do as he was told. Jack and Fallon rolled around on the floor in a desperate struggle for the mastery. The latter, however, was at a disadvantage owing to his hurt arm, and Jack easily pounded him into submission. Rolling him over, he pulled the gun from his pocket and gave Fallon a tap with the butt that dazed him. Taking a piece of line off a nail, Jack hurriedly bound Fallon's hands together and left him to grab a second fire-extinguisher in the next room. The combined efforts of Jack and the night watchman finally mastered the fire, though at one time it looked as if the fire would get away from them. It probably would have done so but for the fact that the wall of the building was brick.

When Jack saw that the watchman could finish the work, he ran into the office and telephoned to the police. Then he telephoned to Director Nash's house and told him the facts. The police and the startled director reached the laboratory about the same time. The wreck of the scene and the smell of burned tar told the

The night watchman told his, and identified Fallon and his companion in a general way as the parties who caught him unawares, bound and gagged him. Jack then told his story, and it was clear that for him the laboratory would have gone up in fire and smoke, and the rascals have escaped detection. Director Nash complimented Jack highly on his valuable services, and told him he would lose nothing by what he had done. He ordered the police to take the prisoners to jail, preferring the charge of attempted arson against them. Of course, the destruction of the scenery meant delay. The film the scenery was to be used in was to be rushed, that is why the scenic artist had been told to come down Sunday and paint it. The carpenter had to do his work all over again before the artist could do his, and the director wrote a note to him to come down next day and get busy on it. He asked Jack to come, too, and help him out.

"The artist can do nothing to-morrow," he said to Jack. "You can explain the situation to him when he comes, though his eyes will tell him that his labor must be deferred until Monday. That means we can't finish the film until Tuesday, which is too bad, as we had promised to deliver it by the middle of the week."

Jack and the watchman threw the burned debris out into the lot and cleaned the room up for the day. Then he washed off the grime and went home with the book he had come to get. He told Mr. Nash that he ought to have the book rebound in style and stamped on the outside with the date of the near fire, for if he had not forgotten the book he would not have been on hand to save the laboratory from destruction and put the rascally firebugs behind the bars. The director probably did not follow Jack's suggestion. The book, though primarily the cause of the saving of the laboratory, was not a thing of great moment, and Mr. Nash never wasted any thought on such things. He was grateful to Jack, however, and when pay-day came around again the boy found a brand new \$100 bill in his envelope, with a slip of paper attached on which was written "From J. D. N.," and the boy was at no loss to understand why it was there.

CHAPTER IX.—In Which Noah Turns Up.

Fallon and his associate were brought before the magistrate next day, and on the testimony of Jack and the night watchman they were held for trial. Three days passed, during which Jack worked faithfully for the interests of the company, and rose daily in the estimation of Director Nash, as well as in the good opinion of all connected with the studio. Farmer Whippletree paid the bill for damages brought upon him by his absent son, because he recognized it was the cheapest way out of a bad scrape, but Jack's wage claim was still pending. That fact didn't worry the boy any, as he had over \$100 in bank, and was enjoying life a whole lot more than would have been his position had he remained on the farm. One early September afternoon, after he had quit work for the day, he was standing

outside the laboratory entrance waiting for Thompson, when a shabby-looking lad came along in a listless way, and looked his way. The youth stopped and stared at him. Jack stared back, then opened his eyes in surprise, for in the youth he recognized Noah Whippletree.

"Hello, Noah, is that you?" he said.

"Yes, it's me. Have you left the farm?"

"Long ago—the day after you did."

"What for?"

"Because I got a better job."

"Did dad pay you?" he asked with a sickly grin.

"No; he's holding the money back until the circuit court of the county seat passes on my claim, which should be soon."

"Did you sue him?"

"Yes, but it hasn't come to trial yet. I judge from your looks that you haven't gone home yet. Why don't you? You're the picture of hard luck."

"I don't want to have my hide taken off."

"Perhaps your father will be so glad to see you again that he'll let you off the whipping he threatened you with."

"He ain't to be trusted."

"Write to your mother and tell her you'll come home if she'll protect you."

"She can't do nothin'."

"But you look like a wreck. Have you spent all that money you took with you?"

"Every cent of it. If it wasn't for that I'd go home, but the old man will never forgive me for pinchin' his boodle."

"Then you're broke, I suppose?"

"Fact. I don't know where I can get a meal to-night, and I hain't ate anythin' since mornin', and only coffee and rolls then," said Noah with a famished look.

"Well, Noah, we never were friends, but I won't see you go hungry. There's a small restaurant two blocks down this street. I'll take you there in a minute and treat you to all you can eat."

Noah's face brightened up at the prospect. He had been knocking around Elyria for a week, doing an odd job here and there to get food and lodging, and had found it a rocky experience. He was about as miserable as any boy could well be, but even so he could not muster up resolution to hike to the farm and face his stern father. Desperate as was the situation, the vision of the home barn, and an angry parent with a rawhide in his hand, filled him with abject terror. Starvation seemed the lesser misery of the two. Jack asked Noah about his experience since he ran away from home. The boy said he had had a bang-up time as long as his money lasted, then he began to experience the seamy side of life. Thompson came out, and Jack told him who his companion was, and what he was up against. When they left Noah at the restaurant, they each passed him a dollar-bill, and the money looked awfully big to the young vagrant.

"Drop around to that building on the corner where you met me, ask for me, and I'll see if I can get you something to do," said Jack, on wishing him good-by.

Noah promised to do so, and then walked for a table and ordered a big meal. When Jack met

Director Nash next morning, he told him about Noah.

"Is that the boy who shot the dart into the horse and caused the smashing of the camera?" said the director.

"Yes. You wouldn't know him now. He looks like a boy tramp."

"Clothes all gone to seed, eh?"

"Yes."

"Last night he had, but I guess he feels better to-day."

"I have a senario that came in the other day in which he would fit very nicely if he was able to do the part."

"He'll be around here some time to-day. You can have a talk with him and see if you can make use of him. 'I'd like to get him something to do.'"

"I thought he always was an enemy of yours?"

"So he was, but I don't harbor any hard feelings toward him on that account."

Just then Nash was called away, so their talk ended. Noah turned up at ten o'clock feeling pretty good after a good breakfast. He was admitted to the laboratory, and Jack saw him. In the course of time Nash deigned to notice him. He had a talk with him, and then turned him over to one of his actors to try if he could coach him to act the part of a boy tramp. Noah was promised \$5 if he made good. As \$5 looked as big as a mountain to him, he was willing to earn it if he could. Noah was not a very intelligent subject to mould, but he took to the part pretty well, and his instructor did the rest. As a result, when the time came he went through the character to the satisfaction of the director, and received the \$5 in addition to some small advances he required while preparing for the part. When he saw the finished film run off on a screen, he was tickled to death over his appearance as a motion picture actor, and he wanted to do more work in the same line.

He said he would work for his board and lodging, and he would see the farm to Jerico before he would go back to it. There was nothing more for him to do in the picture line, but as he continued to hang around the studio, Director Nash allowed him to do various odd jobs that provided him with a bed and three cheap meals. He did this more to oblige Jack than because he had any real use of Noah.

"I think you ought to notify his father that he is here," said Nash one day to Jack. "He is only wasting his time about the laboratory. He's only half educated, and if he goes home he'll be sent back to school."

"I have been thinking it's my duty to do as you suggest," replied Jack, "but Noah stands in mortal fear of what his father will do to him if he goes home, and as I know his old man is inclined to be vindictive, I don't want to be responsible for putting him in the way of a terrible whipping."

"A whipping will wear off in a few hours, and then the boy will be home and no longer subject to the vicissitudes he is now facing. Perhaps if you write to his mother you can save him from the consequences he is dreading."

"I think I will," said Jack.

And he did that evening, stating that Noah was repentant and would be a good boy if met half way. He hinted that if he received a whipping he was likely to run away again, and that might be the last they'd ever see of him. He posted the letter, and on the forenoon of the second day Farmer Whippletree made his appearance at the laboratory in his light wagon. He asked for Jack, and the boy went out to see him.

"You wrote my wife that you knew where Noah was," said the farmer. "He is here in town, I suppose?"

"He is. If you will promise to treat him right I'll produce him."

"What do you mean by right?" cried the farmer. "You have no right to dictate to me what I shall do with my son."

"I know it; but I think if you overlook the past you will do better by him than if you whip him. It is the fear of a flogging that is keeping him away. He is practically a vagrant, and would doubtless have been arrested as such and sent to the workhouse but for me. I have helped him as much as I can, but he ought to go home and not hang around this city, where he is liable to get in with bad associates and go to the dogs. If you will promise to let him off easy he will go home with you, and the experience he has been through will do him a lot of good. All boys can't be handled alike with advantage. A beating will knock the nonsense out of some in short order, but will have a contrary effect on others. A boy's nature should be studied in order to discover the best way to govern him. Are you willing to let up on Noah?"

As Mrs. Whippletree had pleaded earnestly with her husband concerning Noah after getting Jack's letter, and had won his unwilling promise to omit a whipping, the farmer gave out a reply in the affirmative.

"Very good," said Jack. "Your son is in our laboratory."

"What laboratory?" ejaculated Mr. Whippletree.

"This building. It's the studio of the Globe Film Manufacturing Company. Follow me inside and take charge of him."

The farmer did so. When Noah saw him he tried to hide himself. Jack caught him and told him his father had come after him and had promised not to whip him.

"Did he say that?" said Noah.

"He did."

"So the youth ventured to approach his father in a shamefaced way. The farmer was staggered at the rocky appearance of his son. He questioned him about his movements since he left home, and then led him out to the wagon. In a couple of minutes more father and son were on their way back to the farm.

CHAPTER X.—The Hollow Tree.

Jack, by this time, had acquired a pretty good knowledge of the motion picture business. He used his eyes and ears to the best advantage, and did not hesitate to ask questions at the proper

time. As the Globe Film Manufacturing Company got to be more generally known, and was published in the various moving picture publications in the list of the concerns that were in the market for scenarios, its daily mail became heavier. Where formerly the company received from three to half a dozen scenarios a day, it now got fifteen to thirty. Most of them were sent in by new beginners, and as a consequence had faults more or less glaring. To Jack was given the job of going over these manuscripts, for he knew what the company wanted, and what would pass muster with Mr. Nash. Sometimes he found brilliant ideas buried under the weight of writers' inexperience.

He would carry these home with him and try his hand at knocking them into proper shape. If he extricated them from the declined with thanks class, Nash paid him half the price of the scenario, and the author the other half. In some instances, by a little judicious pruning, or supplying some important omission, Jack made a scenario available. In such cases the writer got the full benefit of his work. Jack never attempted to improve any manuscript that did not show the earmarks of real ability. It would have been a waste of time for him to potter with an ordinary subject, for it never would have got by Nash, who was becoming more particular as to the goods every day, so to speak, owing to business competition. All the film companies were reaching out for the best that could be got. Originality was insisted on, and what was out of the ordinary most desired.

Thus Jack gradually became the recognized editor of the scenarios that were submitted to the studio, and while he was not authorized to accept any manuscripts, that province being presided over by Mr. Nash himself, still his O. K. of a scenario nine times out of ten was approved by the director and the manuscripts taken. Jack was not infrequently called on to furnish a scenario himself on lines indicated by Mr. Nash, and as he knew how to produce the stuff in proper shape, he added quite a bit of extra money to his bank account. Mr. Nash had come to regard the boy as one of his most valuable aids. He was quick to pick up the fine points of the film game, and was always on the job. He was always ready to do anything for the interest of the company, and the spirit he showed was duly appreciated by the management.

At the end of three months he was raised to \$15, and the chances were he would get \$20 by the end of another three months; with other raises in the future. He was ambitious to learn how to work the camera, and under Thompson's instructions he made considerable headway. Indeed, he was intrusted with the task of taking several scenes during a two days' absence of the cameraman, and his work was approved of. Jack was determined to learn all branches of the business, so that his usefulness to the company could not be disputed. His good nature and attractive personality made him popular with everybody who had dealings with the studio. He had a pleasant word for every one, and was always ready to sympathize with and help out an actor or actress who was in trouble for any cause whatever. One day Nash had under consideration a

clever scenario, one of the scenes of which called for an old mill exterior.

"Now where in creation will I find a real mill to fill the bill within reasonable distance of this place?" he remarked to Jack.

"Nothing easier," replied the boy. "There's an old mill down Whippletree's way."

"Is that so?" said Nash. "I didn't notice it when we took those scenes down on the road this summer."

"It isn't in sight of the road. It's in a hollow near the woods. The old road leading past it was abandoned long ago."

"Has it an ancient look, and is it in good condition?"

"It fills the bill in both respects. It was built when this part of the country was rather wild and woolly."

"Good. One of the scenes also calls for a farmhouse porch. Maybe we can induce Whippletree, for a consideration, to let us use the front of his house."

"Possibly, if we find him in good humor. Noah would like another chance to get into a picture, even if he had nothing to do but shine as one of those in the background," laughed Jack.

Arrangements were made to visit the old mill in question, two automobiles being required to convey all concerned to the scene of action. If Whippletree objected to his house figuring in a motion picture, Mr. Nash had no doubt he could secure the co-operation of some other farmer in that neighborhood. The rest of the film was taken in the studio, and in the suburbs of Elyria, and one pleasant morning early in October the party started for the mill. It was something of a ride, but the cars covered it in two hours to the point where the old road branched off to the mill and the woods around it.

The old road was seldom used now by farmers who found it useful as a short cut. It was out of repair, and during winter was in pretty bad shape. Now it was dusty and overgrown with weeds and other kinds of coarse vegetation, which has a tendency to come up anywhere under any kind of conditions. Under Jack's guidance the cars reached the old mill. It looked ancient enough, for it had been out of use all of thirty years, but having been substantially constructed of seasoned timber, it had stood the storms and the inevitable progress of decay uncommonly well. Jack had no part to play in the scene that embraced the mill. Indeed, he seldom took part in a film except as a supernumerary performer. That was the one part of the film game he was not particularly interested in. His ambition did not run in the acting groove. His interest was centered in the making of films for the rapidly widening market into which the independent concerns, like the Globe Company, were daily obtaining a stronger foothold, despite the strong opposition of the Trust, which was trying to maintain its monopoly of the business. At the time of which we write the films of the independents were barred from the larger cities, but as new motion picture houses were springing up like mushrooms all over the country, the outsiders were gradually coming into prominence, and proving formidable competitors.

Good films, no matter who made them, were

bound to find their way before the public, who was becoming more discriminating in its tastes. Poor films were soon relegated to the scrap heap, and as it cost much to turn out a poor subject as a taking one, the manufacturers were rapidly waking up to the fact that they must turn out the best or face a loss. The Globe Company was never asleep at any stage of the game. While the management paid only the standard price for an accepted script, they let it be known that they were prepared to add a bonus for an exceptionally good plot. This bonus practically amounted to double price.

That made it worth while for the writers were to give the time and attention necessary to turn in good material. First-class and experienced writers were still scarce. The demand for the best stuff was growing faster than the supply, because the standard kept getting higher owing to the intense competition. Jack had visited the old mill several times while he was employed on the Whippletree farm, and it seemed to him like meeting an old friend to revisit the place. As he had nothing to do with the business in hand, he wandered around the immediate neighborhood to kill time until the mill scene had been taken to the satisfaction of the director.

The scene had to be rehearsed first before the camera was called into play, and after all had been completed the people would dine on the ground, as Nash had provided a substantial collation for his people. Then the party was to adjourn to the Whippletree farm and take the other scene there, if the farmer offered no objection. The mill stood on the edge of the dried-up stream which had once supplied the motive power to drive the ponderous wheel. There was nothing left of this wheel now but part of a decayed shaft. The only evidence of the stream was a shallow rivulet which trickled over the remains of the dam, and the wheel-covered bed, the original outlines of which were obliterated. Jack prowled around at random, and finally found his way into the wood. He remembered an old lightning-scarred wreck of a big tree, and he went in that direction to see if it was still standing. It was, and seemed likely to stand there for many years yet, though it looked bleached and rotten. The lightning had gouged a hole through its center, and this hole had widened after the death of the tree, owing to the action of dry rot. Among the roots of the tree another hole connected with the hollow interior. As Jack sat down near it a ray of sunshine coming through the leaves of the trees shone into the hole, and he saw something bright reflected inside. His curiosity was aroused, and he reached his arm in, but could not touch it. He flashed a match in, and the glare showed him an oblong tin box.

"How came that there?" he asked himself. "They must have hidden it in this old tree. Why should they have hidden it?"

As he could not answer the questions, he gave the matter up and looked around for a piece of wood with a crook in it to draw the box within reach of his hand. There were plenty of broken limbs scattered about, but none of them answered his purpose. Finally he climbed up the old trunk and looked down through the opening. He saw that it was large enough to admit his body,

and he decided to drop inside, push the box over to the hole in the roots and climb out, a feat that did not look very difficult of accomplishment. He clambered up into the crotch, let his leg down amid a shower of punk wood, and dropped. He hit the earth inside, but a surprise awaited him. It gave way under his weight, as if it were a cardboard floor, and down he went some distance, accompanied by a rush of dirt.

The movie performers missed Jack when they had their dinner, but the director said that probably Jack had taken the opportunity to visit some of his friends and nothing more was thought of his absence. Meantime Jack had the time of his life in getting out of the hole with his box. By the time he succeeded the movie contingent were on their way home, the director expecting he would follow by train. It was late that night when Jack reached his boarding house with his box under his arm. The cameraman had arrived and asked Jack where he had gone to before they had sat down to their meal. Jack, who kept nothing from Thompson, told him all and showed him the box. The box was opened and found to contain nearly \$5,000 in currency and bills. Of course Jack made up his mind that the right thing to do would be to advertise it. Thompson agreed with him. So Jack wrote out an advertisement and had it inserted in the best paper. Of course a number of people answered it, but they were only fakers, for no one came anywhere near the right amount in the box.

CHAPTER XI.—Jack Enacts the Role of Hero.

The first of the new year came around, and the unidentified tin box still remained in Jack's possession. And incidentally Jack's wages had been raised to \$20 a week. He was now more than ever regarded by Director Nash as his right-hand man. His judgment on scenarios was considered as good as any editor obtainable. As an all-around assistant he had made himself very valuable. Occasionally a new playlet was made by the company—some little playlet founded on Revolutionary times, or even on an English or French subject of the days when romance flourished in a more pronounced way than at the present day.

In such pieces gaudily attired cavaliers and fair ladies in wigs and faces patches appeared before the modern camera, and enacted in pantomime scenes of a past era, either in the open where nothing up-to-date intruded, or in the studio with a painted background consistent with the period they belonged to. Jack demonstrated a fine taste in assisting in the direction of costume pieces. He had a natural eye for grouping people to the best advantage. Nash said he was a born stage manager, and that he needed only more experience to direct the taking of any kind of photoplay. One of the prettiest one-reel subjects turned out by the Globe Company was conceived, written up and largely directed by the boy. Two-reel pieces were now coming in vogue, and the largest studios were giving attention to them, but the Globe Company had not turned any out as yet. Jack had written a two-reel scenario for

the fun of the thing. Nash went over it and declared it was worthy of production. The policy of the company prevented its acceptance for the present, but Nash said they would surely use it later on.

A two-reel subject is simply the extension of a one-reel film to cover twice the length, or about 2,000 feet of film. The action, however, must be sustained without padding, and scenario writers, even of the first class, have found this difficult of accomplishment, though one might think differently. The Globe Company either failed to heed the trend of the business, which was bound to demand two, and even three-reel pictures, or did not care to take the risk as an independent house of pushing out into the new field. That the management was short-sighted in this respect is shown by the fact that the two-reel production has now come to stay, while three-reel subjects are becoming more frequent, and even four and five-reel ones are being pushed to the front as "features."

About the first of February, Director Nash was called East on special business connected with the company, and he left Jack in charge of the studio, with full directions what to do. With the help of Thompson, who was something more than an average cameraman, Jack was to direct the production of the one-reel films scheduled on Nash's list. The boy now assumed the full responsibility of making moving pictures, and the results he achieved would prove or disprove the confidence the director had in his ability in that line. Jack had full confidence in himself, and that was a great part of the battle. He had watched the productions of pictures for so many months that he knew just what was required of him. Then he was so popular with the company of professionals that they were willing to do as well for him as they had to for Nash. They were aware that, young as he was, he knew what he was about. From that moment he started the rehearsal of a reel he made it clear that he was the director, and not Jack Case. He criticized freely, but he had a way of doing it that took the sting out of it, and the performers could hardly feel aggrieved.

He had just as sharp an eye for details and little things as Nash. Nothing escaped his notice, and so the reels he made during the director's absence proved to be finished productions. It is true scenes sometimes had to be done over again, for one cause or another, but that always happens. Thompson passed judgment on the films as soon as each scene was taken. He was censor of the establishment in that respect, for he could pick flaws that even Nash might fail to discover. When he passed his O. K. on a film, you could gamble on it that it was all to the good. They made a good team—Thompson and Jack—and the finished product proved it every time. Nash was much pleased with Jack's work when he returned, and said he had counted on the boy making good. As a consequence Jack got another \$5 boost in his salary. The first reel subject to be taken after Nash got back was called "Treasure of the Incas."

As this was a costume subject, Jack suggested to Nash that he offer prizes to the performers cast in the piece for the best make-up. This was

a new idea, and it was approved by the director, who made the announcement, giving the credit of it to the boy. The professionals interested jumped at the chance to make extra money, and every one of them began ransacking Peruvian literature at the Elyria Public Library with the view of winning the prize. The prize was to go to the artist presenting the most historically correct costume and make-up. Jack also proposed that the Globe Company inaugurate a scenario contest with a capital prize of \$500, and others graded down to \$50.

After some discussion, during which Nash admitted that he approved the idea, it was adopted after the capital prize had been cut down to \$300. Notices were sent to all the motion picture magazines, and an advertisement inserted in each, as well as in other publications, concerning the contest. Spring came around again, and with better weather the company began making more pictures with outside scenery. One pleasant balmy morning Nash was piloting some of his people in two cars to a neighboring district, when a fire-alarm sounded. Some excitement in the block ahead together with the belching of smoke from the third floor windows of a four-story building, indicated where the fire was. Nash hadn't had the chance to get a fire scene of real kind since his company opened up, and it struck him here was the opportunity, perhaps. If he could get a good reel he had no doubt Jack could write a scenario around it, and it was likely to prove a winner. The cars stopped as close to the fire as the director deemed it advisable to go, and leaving the professionals in the autos, he went forward with Jack and the cameraman. Thompson planted his camera and started grinding out thirty odd feet of film as a starter, after which the party moved closer. The first engine was coming down the block, when a girl appeared at one of the smoking windows and called for help. Smoke was already coming out of the story below, and flames were showing themselves on the floor above. The girl's position looked desperate. On the spur of the moment Jack darted forward, and a moment later he was lost in the smoky haze about the front door.

"The boy is mad," cried Nash, excitedly, as a burst of flame came out of the second story windows. "He can't save the girl by going through the house. Her only hope lies in the arrival of a hook-and-ladder truck."

Thompson, though much disturbed by the boy's action, had not failed to take a picture of his daring entry into the house. Then he turned the machine on the approaching fire-engine, and got it coming at full speed. In the meantime Jack was having the time of his life to mount the first and second flights to the third floor, where the imperilled girl was cut off in the burning room. Her terrific shrieks resounded above all other sound and spurred him on. The halls and stairs were thick with smoke, and he was nearly suffocated as he stumbled upward to the third landing. Whether there was any one else in the house he could not tell, but he met with no one. The fire was taking hold fast all around him. He saw he had undertaken a desperate adventure, more desperate than it looked from the outside when he entered the building.

It was as bad to retreat as to go forward. In any case, having undertaken to save the girl, he determined to do it if the feat was possible, for he was pluck to the backbone. The clanging of the engine bells and the cries of the rapidly increasing multitude came to his ears in a confused way. Self-preservation compelled him to drop on his hands and knees and crawl along the landing toward what he believed to be the room where the girl was. He could not see very well, not only because of the increasing smoke, but the smarting it caused his eyes, which ran with tears. At length his head bumped against a door. He rose a little and groped for the knob. Grasping it, he opened the door and fell forward. There was less smoke here than out in the landing, and he pushed the door shut behind him. Had he had his normal vision he would have seen that he was not in the right room, which was a hall bedroom of small size, while the girl was at the window in the big square one to the left. Her cries had ceased, for she had fainted across the sill, and hung there helpless in full view of the crowd on the street and in the houses around about. Two engines with their hose carts had arrived by this time, but the hook-and-ladder truck most wanted of all at that thrilling moment was still on its way, for it had the longer distance to come. Firemen, seeing the awful situation of the young woman, endeavored to reach her by forcing their way not only into the burning building, but by way of the houses on either side, which were not on fire.

Those who tried the burning house were forced back, for no one could now follow Jack and live. The boy made out the outline of the window, and jumped for it. He found it closed and no girl there.

"Great heavens!" he ejaculated, "I am in the wrong room."

He threw up the window and looked out. He was immediately seen, and the crowd set up a shout. He was recognized by Nash and Thompson, and the latter instinctively trailed the camera on him and began grinding away, which showed that his business instinct triumphed over his feelings. Jack saw the girl lying across the sill of the blazing room, with the flames eating their way all around her. There was no chance for him to retrace his steps to the door of that room, the back of which was now a sea of flames. The girl's life hung on a slender thread. The fire was bound to reach and engulf her before the hook-and-ladder, which had swung into sight two blocks away and was coming on pell-mell, could reach the scene. Several firemen, aided by policemen, rushed up the street and swung their hats toward the driver of the truck, urging more speed. The driver undisturbed, and urged his team to its best. The crowd was hushed into terrified silence, for the fate of the girl seemed settled. Firemen appeared at the windows of the adjacent houses, and one of them reached the roof. Then Jack, after taking in the situation, acted. He got out of the window, planting his feet on the cornice of the window below, and reached over to the burning window, holding on with one hand. But he could do nothing in that position. He had to leave the use of both hands, and then balance himself on the other cornice underneath the burning

window. This he might have done at a desperate risk, but he could not save the girl in that position without falling with her to the stoop below, and that would mean death to both.

"What shall I do?" he asked himself excitedly.

What could he do? Then an idea hit him in the fraction of a second. He got back into the hall room, tore the clothes of the bed, hurriedly made a rough rope of them, tied one securely to the bed, the other end around his chest, and got out again. The crowd perceived his purpose, and another shout went up, but was instantly stilled as he reached his foot across the gulf. Then he grasped the hot side of the window where the girl lay, her clothes on fire, and swung over. With great difficulty he pulled the unconscious girl out of the window, grabbed her firmly and fell backward with the blazing figure in his arms just as the hook-and-ladder came racing up.

Fortunately the clothes rope resisted the shock of their fall, and Jack and the burning girl swung on a line with the second floor, half hidden by the clouds of black smoke that puffed from the windows of that floor.

CHAPTER XIV.—Conclusion.

Thompson continued grinding away, for he was getting a corking picture, and the chances were that Jack would escape with his burden. Ladders were thrown off the truck and a suitable one quickly raised under the swinging forms of the burning girl and her brave rescuer. A fireman with an extinguisher rushed up the ladder and turned a stream of chemicals on the girl's form, quickly putting out the fire, though it left her badly burned. Two other firemen followed at his heels. When the extinguisher had done its work, the firemen pulled the two forms on to the ladder and took the girl out of Jack's arms, passing her down to the next fireman, who passed her on.

While she was being wrapped in a blanket and taken to a waiting ambulance, Jack was released from his rope of bed clothes. Without any help he slid to the ground, and the camera was stopped. The fire chief shook Jack by the hand and told him he was a brave fellow. The captain of the truck did likewise, and then began issuing his orders. More ladders were planted and hose taken up.

Already streams were in action on the ground floor, pointing up the stairs. Two streams were turned into the blazing third story, and two more from the ground into the windows of the second story. Another hose was hoisted to the roof, and every effort made to confine the blaze to the house, which was successful. The cameraman got fifty feet more of picture of the blazing house, and then of the crowd and scene around. With blistered hands and begrinned face Jack rejoined his party, and was hailed as a real hero, as indeed he had shown himself to be. He was surrounded by newspaper reporters, one of whom got his picture as he stood, and it appeared in the afternoon papers.

The cameraman was loaded on the car, and the party returned to the laboratory. Nash

ished with the morning's work, which had produced the unexpected and could be turned into a corking one-reel film. A druggist on the way bound Jack's blistered flesh up after he had washed up, and he reached the studio with both hands in bandages. Of course, the afternoon papers were full of his thrilling rescue, while the rescued girl lay on a cot in the hospital very grateful to her unknown preserver, her feelings being shared by her parents when they learned the story, for both were away from the house at the time of the fire—her father at his place of business and her mother on a shopping tour at the stores.

Jack's connection with the Globe Film Manufacturing Company was mentioned in print, and the fact that the company's cameraman had secured films of the fire was touched on. Later on a gentleman called at the laboratory and asked to see Jack. He gave his name as Walter Havens, and he said it was his daughter the boy had saved. He was one of the prominent merchants of Elyria, and quite rich. He was introduced to the hero of the fire, and needless to say, he could not thank Jack enough. The gentleman insisted on carrying Jack to the hospital to see his daughter, whose name was Edith, and though suffering much pain, the girl thanked him over and over again for saving her life. Her mother, who was present, added her grateful appreciation, and then Jack returned to the studio, where every one metaphorically took off their hats to him. It took a week for Jack's hands to heal up so he could dispense with his bandages, during which time the fire films were developed and thrown on the screen for Jack to put together in plot form. Some additional pictures had to be taken afterward to fill in with and finish the story. In the end a fine, thrilling reel was produced, and it was first exhibited in Elyria and drew crowds for a whole week to one of the movie houses. Prior to that, however, Jack visited Mr. Havens at his store at the gentleman's request. He asked the boy many things about himself, and how he came to go into the motion picture business. Jack told him that he was an orphan, and on the death of his mother he had been thrown on his own resources. In the course of his narrative he described the visit to the old mill, and how he found the tin box with a large sum of money and some other things in it. The merchant pricked up his ears and asked him more particularly about his find. Finally the gentleman said that two years before a thief had robbed his house of a quantity of valuable articles, and among the rest got away with a tin box, the contents of which he exactly described.

"The box I found must be yours, Mr. Havens," said Jack, "for you have told me just what it contained. I will bring it here to-morrow so you can make sure of it."

Next day Jack brought the box, and the merchant immediately identified an old watch which the box contained, which had once belonged to his father, and later his parent's friend, and the diamond ring. The notes and gold also fitted the sum he claimed to be in the box at the time the thief stole it. So Jack handed his find over to its rightful owner. The merchant immediately presented him with half the notes, or \$1,000, as a suitable remuneration of his services in the matter.

"I cannot pay you for saving my daughter's life," said Mr. Havens, "for her life is beyond price to me; and were I to turn over to you every dollar I possess, I would still be your debtor. Nevertheless, I hope you will let me help you along in life. I shall be glad to buy an interest in the company you are connected with if it can be done, for you seem to have chosen the film game as your life industry."

Jack protested that he expected to work his own way in that direction, and he declined the gentleman's offer. Mr. Havens did not press the proposition on him when he saw how the boy took it, but in a few days he called on Mr. Nash and had a talk with that gentleman.

The result was that Nash said he would be glad to take the boy into the company of a stockholder as that would ensure a continuation of his services, which were daily becoming more valuable. Havens then bought a third interest in the Globe Company and presented it to his daughter's rescuer, through Mr. Nash, who assured Jack that it was the most fortunate thing that could happen to him, as the business was growing, and would ultimately pay him fine dividends. So Jack swallowed his scruples and took the stock, thus becoming a producer in the film game. We have not space to follow his future career up to the present time, when Mr. Nash's statement of the moving picture business has come true, but he is rapidly acquiring a bank account out of the profits on his stock. Incidentally, Jack has become a steady visitor at the Havens home, in the suburbs of Elyria, and Edith Havens is the attraction that draws him there. Some day, it is confidently expected by his friends, that the girl whose life he saved at the risk of his own, will marry the boy who made moving pictures.

Next week's issue will contain "A SMART NEW YORK BOY; or, FROM THE TENEMENTS TO WALL STREET."

LEOPARD WATCHES MAN PUFF PIPE AND STUDY

A native policeman in Uganda, I see, had the presence of mind to fix his bayonet and charge a leopard which was mauling a white man.

It seems that there are leopards and leopards. A friend of mine, inspecting mining claims in Portuguese Manicaland, slid down a ten-foot bank into a clump of gentle-looking bushes. On arrival he found himself within a yard of a leopard.

Both were surprised. My friend was unarmed except for a short axe, notebook and pencil, for people in Africa do not go about topped up as you see them in the picture books. There was no room to turn. It was a nice shady place, with a half-seat on the bank.

So he went on with his studies and his pipe (not omitting a good grip on the axe), and tried to make a noise like the strong, silent men you read about in novels and never meet.

Evidently he impressed the animal with the idea that he was used to hobnobbing with leopards, for presently it strolled leisurely away. A tame but not unsatisfactory ending.

CURRENT NEWS

RAT CAUGHT AND ATE FLIES

A rat trapping flies and dining off them in a store window was the novel sight that attracted the attention of Ed Disney when he came uptown the other morning. Mr. Rat had the window all to himself and was so busy catching flies that he disregarded the spectators outside on the walk. Standing on his hind feet he jumped nimbly about, sometimes catching two flies at a time and eating them with apparent gusto. The owner of this useful rat would probably loan him to any curious friend who would catch him.

BURGLAR WAS OPOSSUM

The family of F. M. Hill of Lynchburg Va., was disturbed several nights by a noise which appeared to be made by some one walking lightly on the veranda roof. A night or two ago Hill, who is a traveling salesman, was at home when the noise recurred. Getting a flashlight to investigate, Hill found a large opossum in a pear tree near the house and the limb of the tree on which the animal was was making the noise. Before Mr. Hill could get out of the house the opossum had disappeared. The animal, it was discovered later, was in the tree after pears.

COSTUME THAT DEFIES COLD.

The most novel dress in the world is that of the Laplander.

He wears two or three of the same garments, one over the other, including two pairs of shoes filled with dried grass, and two pairs of gloves stuffed with hay.

In addition, his cap is filled with an eiderdown pillow, and a long woolen scarf is wound several times around the neck and over the head.

The most difficult part of his toilet is the preparation of his shoes. The dried grass is made ready by warming it before a fire, and pulling it out and rubbing it well together in order to render it soft and pliable. A quantity is then made into a ball and placed within the shoe, leaving a cavity for the foot, which reposes safely and warmly in the middle. Laplanders never wear stockings or socks.

Talking of his visit to Lapland, Frank Hedges Butler, one of the pioneers of aviation and motor-ing, says: "All told, I put on no fewer than 25 separate articles of clothing! The style of the costume is hundreds of years old, and it is eminently practical, because one never feels cold once this novel and curious outfit has been adopted."

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Held Down By Poverty

— OR —

A POOR BOY'S STRUGGLE FOR SUCCESS

By GASTON GARNE

(A Serial Story.)

CHAPTER X.—(Continued).

Mr. Crossman looked approvingly at him.

"You're a sharp boy, Harry," he said, "and I can see that you are going to earn your salary and more. I have suspected for some time past that I was being robbed of goods in some way, but in this line of business there is always more or less loss of that kind, and we get careless until something like this wakes us up. Keep your eyes open all the time, my boy, and whenever you think that anything is wrong don't be afraid to tell me, and I'll back you up."

"I will do as you say, sir," said Harry, and then walked out of the private office.

During the time that he had been in the office with Mr. Crossman, Barrett had helped Bill Strong to carry in the extra cheeses, and had then picked up a newspaper and sauntered over to the vicinity of Griggs's desk. Holding the paper up in front of his face as though reading it, he spoke in a low voice to the bookkeeper:

"Say, did you get on to all that?"

"Yes," softly answered Griggs, bending low over a ledger.

"What do you think of it?"

"I think that kid is too sharp."

"Sharp is no name for it. Why, he only had the quickest flash possible at the order when it fell from Bill's hand when he was passing it over to me, and yet he read it correctly. Moreover, he's about as ready to fight as to eat, and Bill said to me when we were getting the cheeses in that he looked ready to punch him at the drop of the hat. Had the nerve to say that he'd call a policeman if Bill didn't turn his horse around."

"He looks like a fighter."

"Yes, and he is, and now that he's spotted one little game he'll be on the lookout for more. What do you say?"

"That's right enough."

"Well, what's to be done?"

"We must get rid of him."

"But how?"

"I'll try to fix up a job on him."

"You may find him too clever for that."

"Then the gang will have to fix him," said Griggs.

"He's licked two of them now. I tell you the kid's been fighting ever since he was ten years old. I heard him tell Tom Jackson so."

"That's all right," softly said Griggs, making an entry in the ledger and blotting it without raising his eyes to the porter, "but if I have to tell the gang to tackle him it will be in such numbers that he'll have no show. In some way we've got to get rid of him."

At that moment Harry came out of the private office, and still looking at the paper as though

much interested, the rascally porter walked away from the bookkeeper's desk.

CHAPTER XI.

Tackled By A Crowd In A Dark Street, Harry Hale Fights The Gang Like A Tiger.

Harry found himself a hero in the store.

Tom Jackson and the two salesmen came to him when they had a chance, and he was warmly congratulated.

Even Griggs smiled at him, and called to him as he passed the desk that he was doing good work.

As has been said, Harry instinctively distrusted this man, and he felt in his heart that the praise the bookkeeper was bestowing on him was not sincere, but he was diplomatic enough to thank the man for his good opinion and pass on without comment.

Barrett pretended to feel very badly about the matter.

"I've been here a good many years," he said to Harry, "and such a thing never occurred before. I was careless, of course, in not looking closely at the order, but I really thought it called for three dozen."

"Oh, anybody can make a mistake," said Harry, but for all that he did not place implicit faith in the declaration of the porter. The order had been neatly typewritten, that he had seen in the brief glance that he had had at it when he picked it up from the floor, and Barrett had at once taken it to the desk, and as nobody but the porter and the bookkeeper had handled it, the cause for the blurring lay between them.

When Christine called in next day, Harry found out at once that Mr. Crossman had told her of the incident, for she came up to him at once and warmly congratulated him on detecting the error.

"Unless it was something more than an error," she said, in a significant way. "Papa says if it was something else your clever work will put a stop to it."

Harry blushed at this praise from the pretty girl, and Griggs, who happened to look up at this moment and noted that the boy and the girl were standing together, scowled in a vicious way before he realized what he was doing, and then he put on a smile as Christine looked up, and bowed politely to her.

It was no secret in the place that Griggs showed great admiration for the pretty daughter of the boss, and it was also well known that the little beauty treated him with the scantiest possible courtesy.

Two days passed by without incident of importance.

Harry not only made good sales, as good as the more experienced salesmen, but he so impressed his customers with his truthfulness and sincerity that they began to ask for him, and Mr. Crossman saw that the boy was actually creating a following in that way.

This did not turn the lad's head, nor cause him to neglect the watchfulness that he now knew the boss expected of him, and even while he was making sales his sharp eyes were here, there and everywhere.

(To be continued.)

ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST

MOST CORKS COME FROM ALGERIA

It is, perhaps, not generally known that in addition to exercising a fairly complete control over the contents of perfume bottles France likewise provides a goodly proportion of the corks. Algeria, which is becoming an increasingly valuable asset to France, is a factor in cork production and in the region of the port of Phillippeville there are more than 200,000 hectares of cork forests, providing an almost inexhaustible supply on which a growing export trade is based, according to *Ungerer's Bulletin*.

In 1921, despite poor trade conditions, nearly 20,000 tons of cork were shipped, while in 1920 the total exports reached 30,000 tons.

On account of depression and low prices it is understood that a considerable stock of cork is being held by producers and exporters awaiting better market conditions.

FURS BECOMING SCARCE

According to Dr. William T. Hornaday it takes 80 skins to make the average mink wrap, 200 for a squirrel coat, and 200 for a black mole coat; 90 skins may go to the making of a striped skunk jacket, and 300 to a Siberian ermine wrap. Before many years, if the present rate of slaughter continues, many of our most interesting animals will be practically extinct; even now the trapper is forced farther afield, and the skins once unmarketable are being used to supply the deficiency; nearer home, the fur of the fireside sphinx appears as trimming for milady's apparel, disguised under the name of "genet." Very little of this murder is excusable on the grounds of necessity, and mere self-interest should lead the ~~man~~ mainly responsible for it to ponder this truth: No more fur-bearing animals, no furs.

HORSE 36 HOURS IN RIVER

A Boston horse whose usual task is to draw a newspaper delivery wagon, qualified as a long distance swimmer when it was rescued from the Charles River last one day recently after spending thirty-six hours in the water. The horse still was swimming when found, but later went to an animal hospital to recover from a bad chill.

Early one morning, as its wagon was standing at the North Station, the horse made its dash for freedom. Its course lay through the train yards, over tracks and culverts. Finally the horse dived through a drawbridge over the Charles River, leaving the wagon and cargo jammed between the rails. For hours the harbor police searched for the animal in vain.

At last a watchman saw the horse swim out from under the pier and make for the open sea. A stern chase in a dory followed, and the swimmer was roped and towed to shore.

HINDUS BATHE IN RIVER WHERE CORPSES FLOAT

Of course I had read about Benares, but I should think the average American of healthy

tastes and decent impulses would be content with a fleeting glance at the sacred city, for that goes on at Benares revolts every modern idea, not only of religion, but of even common sense.

How any people can be called enlightened or even half-civilized, whose religion teaches them to practice the things for which Benares is famous, I cannot understand. For they do bathe in and drink the water of the Ganges, and that is only the beginning of the disgusting, horrifying performance.

We saw it all one morning from a little boat; we arrived at 6.30 o'clock, and by 9 we were unable longer to endure the sights, they were so revolting. First there were the ablutions, which were not merely washing the body outwardly, but were accompanied by gargling and blowing of noses, to the accompaniment of throwing garlands of marigolds and jasmine into the water. Past us floated numerous sacks containing corpses.

As we watched, the carcass of a big sacred bull was brought down to the river bank and thrown in. The steps leading to the river and the banks were in a condition of filth impossible even to mention.

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The Coiner's Wife

By JOHN SHERMAN.

I shall never forget the 13th of December, 1879. The streets of the great city of Manchester had grown depressingly desolate, and a dense black fog prevailed over all the town.

I was hurrying, as fast as the night would allow, from Victoria railway station along the then old and dingy Deansgate, in the direction of my office; just as the cathedral bells were chiming the hour of twelve.

Benumbed with cold, I found, to my great joy, a cheerful fire blazing in my room, which, thanks to my comrade, who had retired for the night, was considerably prepared for me.

I took off my great-coat and muffler, drew a chair close to the fender, and began thinking over the incidents of a case I had that afternoon brought to a successful issue, when, with the suddenness of a startled night-bird's scream, I heard a piteous and prolonged shriek issuing from beneath the unshuttered window.

I sprang to my feet, and gazing in the direction of the sound, saw a sight I shall never forget while memory holds a seat in my brain.

A wild, white face, with long dishevelled hair hanging over an ill-clad form, was gesticulating in a beseeching manner close to the fire-lit panes.

Cool and collected as I usually am under extraordinary circumstances, I must confess to a feeling of terror taking possession of my whole frame at that instant, and I sat there rooted to the spot.

It was only for a moment, though—or, perhaps, as long as it would take one to count ten—before the apparition, as it seemed to be, vanished as suddenly from my transfixed gaze as it had in coming upon me with all its ghastly whiteness.

"This is very strange," I involuntarily exclaimed, "and puzzles me not a little. What can it mean?"

Then, striding toward the door, I flung it wide open; but there was nothing before me—only the black, choking fog, and the dead silence of the street.

For a little while I stood like one bewildered. I strained my ears in the anxious hope of catching the sound of some one's footfall; but it was all in vain—the quiet remained unbroken.

Pushing back the door, I turned to re-enter the room, when my eyes caught sight of a piece of white paper that lay upon the wide sill of the window.

"Ah," I thought, "here, then, is the explanation of this deep mystery."

I took it to the light, opened it, and, much to my astonishment, found a message of deep anguish, addressed to me, in almost undeciphered characters.

The note was wet in places as if with tears, and it bore indubitable evidence of having been hurriedly written. This is what it said:

"If you would stop more crime, perhaps murder, come at once to No. 13 Tomson's Court. Am

followed. Heaven save me and my child! What shall I do? Rescue us, and Heaven bless you. Be careful. Conceal yourself. Watch. Top room at back. Lizzie Thornley."

Thornley—Thornley! The name appeared familiar to me. I went to my diary, turned to letter T, and found the following entry:

November 24, 1878.—Bill Thornley, alias Springer, alias Saxley, coiner—wanted.

Could this, then, be the man, who, for nearly eighteen months, had successfully eluded our most vigilant pursuit? It seemed more than probable.

Was the information, however, contained in that mysterious message of a genuine character? Or was it meant to lead me into a trap? The promptings of my heart answered me, and that answer was: Bill Thornley, desperado, you are in Tomson's Court, and I'll have you, my slippery beauty, before another day is over.

It was very late, or, rather, I ought to say, the day was young, when I put out the office lights; for the bell of St. Peter's had just rung out the hour of one.

I had decided, whatever might be the consequences to my unknown visitor, to go home and sleep over the matter, and then report the circumstances to the inspector, so as to receive his sanction to the step, before putting my plans into execution.

With this resolution strong upon me I started upon my journey home. My way lay in the direction of Greengate, and several times ere I reached Blackfriars Bridge I saw the vision of that white face, with its look of unutterable terror, fixed unmovably on me.

Late in the forenoon of the same day I returned to the office and duly reported my experience of the previous night.

"This looks like a serious job for you, Lomax," said Inspector Jones, as soon as I had finished my report. "Just turn to the album there and look at S. and T. for a portrait of 'Springer,' or 'Saxley,' or 'Thornley.' He has done seven years, but not accounted for himself for a long time past. Is that it? Ah, good! Take it with you, and if you get a chance of comparing it with the original, and you find they agree, nab him—that's all. Would you like Schofield with you?"

"No," I answered.

"Well, in any case, be quite prepared to face rough work, for if your man should turn out to be the one I suspect, look sharp, I advise you."

After these and other timely hints I retired to the wardrobe adjoining Jones's room. I went in a clean-shaven, good-looking man of twenty-seven, and in half an hour afterward came out again in the character of a middle-aged woman, dressed in a rather seedy suit of black.

I had on a faded dress of cashmere, a long circular cloak of the same material, and a matronly-looking bonnet, from beneath which hung longish locks of iron-gray hair, while a thick veil drooping down in front completed the transformation. I must not forget to mention, though, that I took with me a small wallet of pins, needles and tape, under the pretext of having them for sale. My get-up was perfect. I looked to all the world like one who had seen better days, but was reduced now to a state of genteel poverty.

It was close upon three o'clock in the afternoon when I sallied out of Albert street, and a drizzling rain was making matters most uncheerful.

I had no difficulty in finding Tomson's Court. It was situated in Little Peter street, and in that direction I turned my footsteps. I must confess my mind was not without some misgivings as to the successful accomplishment of my plans. Still I had before played two or three bold games as a detective with considerable credit, and why should I fail in this?

Proceeding along the dark and narrow yard of Tomson's Court, I noticed a knot of unkempt women of most repulsive appearance standing talking together, and by their earnest demeanor I knew that they had some serious business at hand.

Sudden as thought my wallet was out, and I stood before them cringingly beseeching them to buy my wares. But of course it was all to no purpose. I neither sold anything nor heard a word that would give me the faintest clue.

Watching my opportunity, I got away from them, and passed into No. 13 unseen by any one. The room was situated at the end of a long, dark and winding lobby, and the stench that met me was almost overpowering.

I paused a moment listening, but not a sound did I hear. Then I knocked at the door, very feebly at first, then louder and louder, and yet there came no response to me.

I knocked again, so as to be certain there was no one in the room, and still received no answer. My curiosity was now aroused. I took from my pocket a small bunch of skeleton keys—I never went out without them—and noiselessly opened the door. As soon as I entered I stood aghast at the sight that met my eyes.

In one corner of the room, stretched upon a heap of straw, I saw the form of a woman, half naked and motionless, with her eyes closed, as if in death.

I staggered toward her, turned her face to the light, and, merciful heavens, recognized in her the mysterious midnight visitor whose wild look had so possessed me!

I turned her head more to the light, and was horrified to see a thin stream of blood oozing from her snow-white brow upon the face and hands of a little babe that nestled at her breast.

A few moments afterward she fixed a steady, wondering gaze on me, then tried to speak.

"Pray, do not for the present agitate yourself," I exclaimed, in a well-assumed female voice.

Three chairs, an old deal box and a dilapidated table formed the principal articles in the room. Two other things, however, attracted my attention more than all besides. They were a long wooden bench, such as is used by carpenters, and from the nature of the tools I saw lying about—with dies and models of various sizes—my suspicions became fully confirmed.

The other object which arrested my attention was a strong, capacious wardrobe in the opposite corner, facing the bench. Its folding doors stood a little ajar, and I grew curious to know the character of its contents.

I was just rising from my seat, with the intention of making a closer inspection, when the woman opened her eyes again and beckoned me

to her side. Then, in a voice just raised above a whisper, she said:

"Who are you that have found your way into this miserable dwelling?"

"I am a woman peddling a few simple wares," I answered; "but how I managed to find myself here is more than I can tell; yet I am thankful I have reached you, if it is only that I may be of some simple service to you, for I see you need a helping hand."

"Ah, 'tis true—'tis true," she replied; "but I fear your kind assistance has come too late—yes, too late!"

"I hope not. Tell me, though, how you have come by that wound in your temple. Is it the result of a fall?"

"No, no; it was done by him—my husband. He struck me with a hammer because I would not consent to his taking away my child."

"Merciful heavens, can such things be? Where is he now?" I somewhat eagerly inquired.

"Last night, a little before twelve, he came home in a terrible temper. I saw murder lurking in his eyes, and after listening to his fearful oaths, I ran to the police station, pursued by him. I could not attract attention. He overtook me just as I re-entered this room, and—Hark! What is that?"

I motioned to the woman to be silent, while I crept noiselessly into the open wardrobe.

I closed the folding doors from within, and, as good fortune would have it, discovered a large crevice through which I could see the movements of any one who might choose to enter the apartment.

The minutes elapsed seemed hours to me, and I was beginning to think that, after all, my ears had deceived me, when, very slowly, and without the faintest sound, the door opened, and the figure of a short, stout, bushy-bearded man crept in. It was Thornley.

He stole to where Lizzie Thornley lay; he bent over her, as if to assure himself that she was unaware of his presence.

Slipping his fingers in his waistcoat pocket, he drew forth a small key. With this he opened a secret panel in the wainscot of the wall, and there I saw great piles of glittering coin, which my practical eyes told me were spurious all.

With the rapidity of a panther springing on its prey I flung open the wardrobe doors and sprang on him. The suddenness of my appearance struck him motionless and dumb. He could but glare at me, while I held him in a vise-like grip, and his lips trembled and grew ashy pale.

At such a moment as this a detective needs all the coolness he can command, for then it is that his victim is almost powerless of resistance. The latter becomes semi-paralyzed with surprise, and before he knows the meaning of it finds the bracelets on his wrists. At least such was the case with the ruffian Thornley. I made short work of him. As for his wife and child (for such they proved to be), I had them tenderly conveyed to the Royal Infirmary, where for ten long days and nights of suffering she and her baby lay, and then their spirits crossed the confines of a better world.

Thornley was found guilty of manslaughter, and I had the satisfaction of hearing him sentenced to a long term of penal servitude.

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ITEMS OF INTEREST

DAKOTA FARMER SHOOTS VULTURE

An American vulture, or "turkey buzzard," a large carrion bird rarely seen in this region now, but a familiar object on the Dakota plains in pioneer days, has been shot in Yankton County by F. J. Kullish, farmer. The bird is a fine specimen, measuring five feet two inches from tip to tip of wings. It is reddish brown and has the usual bald head characteristic of the vulture family. The bird has been given to the biology department of Yankton College for mounting.

KINDNESS TO WIDOW WINS HIM \$1,000

Because Edgar Witcher, cashier of the Martin County Bank, Ind., was kind of Mrs. Martha Mercer, and, as she expresses it in her will, provided an easy chair for her to sit in while transacting business in the bank, he received approximately \$1,000 by the terms of her will.

Mrs. Mercer was a widow without relatives. In the will she makes a specific bequest of \$200 to Mr. Witcher and then makes him one of the five residuary legatees.

The estate will amount to about \$7,000.

CHEMIST BIRD BUILDS NEST 14 FEET HIGH

There is a bird found in Australia, known as the Magapodius, that is not only a chemist, but also a builder of nests that in proportion to its size, when compared with man, make the efforts of the latter seem pygmy-like.

This bird, about the size of a partridge, and weighing about two pounds, builds a nest fourteen feet high, with a circumference of 150 feet.

A man weighs on an average 130 pounds, and in order to build a structure corresponding to the nest of the bird he would have to accumulate a mountain of earth which would be almost double the height and bulk of one of the great pyramids of Egypt.

The mighty task completed, the workman confides its eggs to it. The female usually lays eight, which she disposes in a circle in the centre of the nest among the herbs and leaves which lie

heaped up at this spot. The eggs are placed at exactly equal distances from each other and in a vertical position.

When the laying is completed the Magapodius abandons its masterpiece and its offspring, nature having revealed to it that it is no longer useful to them.

Endowed with a marvelous chemical instinct, this bird only collects such a mass of vegetable matter that it may safely commit the hatching of the eggs to the fermentation they produce. It is, in fact, on the heat so engendered that the bird relies for supplying her place, the mother thus substituting a chemical process for her own cares.

LAUGHS

"Why don't you try to get damages out of the railroad company for running over your wife's poor old mother?" "Oh, I don't believe in pushing my luck too far."

Ted—I'm trying to find some one who knows me, to go security on my note. Ned—Don't you think, my boy, you'd better look for some one who doesn't know you?

Very Young Man—You wouldn't think it, but I've just paid \$5,000 in cash for a house, all made by my own pluck and perseverance. Young Lady—Really! What business are you in? Very Young Man—I'm a son-in-law.

"Now," said the warden to the forger, who had just arrived at the prison, "we'll set you to work. What can you do best?" "Well, if you'll give me a week's practice on your signature, I'll sign your official papers for you," said the prisoner.

New Yorker (at box office window)—Have you two orchestra seats in the fourth row, centre, for to-night? Ticket Seller—Yes, sir. New Yorker (after recovering from the shock)—I guess I don't want them—the show can't be any good!

Giles met an acquaintance on the street the other day, although he artfully tried to avoid him. "Hello, Giles, deah boy!" exclaimed the other. "So glad to see you. I'm going to London next week; can I do anything faw you?" "No, going's enough, thanks," replied Giles, moving on.

A teacher in a lower grade was instructing her pupils in the use of a hyphen. Among the examples given by the children was "bird-cage." "That's right," encouragingly remarked the teacher. "Now, Paul, tell me why we put a hyphen in 'bird-cage.'" "It's for the bird to sit on," was the startling rejoinder.

The street car gave a sudden lurch in rounding a curve, and the charming young girl who was clinging to a strap nearly sat down in the lap of the man who was sitting in the corner. "I beg your pardon, sir," she exclaimed hastily. "Not at all," he replied encouragingly. "Try it again. I don't mind it at all."

GOOD READING

MEXICO'S BIG PYRAMID LARGEST IN THE WORLD

Not only are the two great pyramids, those of the sun and the moon, situated near San Juan de Tectihuacan, Mexico, to be restored to their original lines, but the Mexican Government has made an appropriation for excavating and reconstructing the ruins of the great buried city surrounding the pyramids, which flourished more than 4,000 years ago.

During the last few years immediately preceding the revolutionary period, considerable work had been done in the matter of clearing away the accumulation of debris that covered the pyramid of the sun, and it stands forth to-day as one of the greatest wonders of the world, according to archaeologists.

This pyramid is three times as large as the great Cheops pyramid near Cairo, Egypt, and in its construction great blocks of stone were used.

It is 1,400 feet square at the bottom. In height it is only 200 feet, and but for this fact would be one of the most imposing structures ever made by man, it is stated. The pyramid of the sun is smaller than the one of the moon.

MOUNTAIN DEMOLISHED TO IMPROVE BIG CITY

In order to permit the extension of the City of Rio de Janeiro a mountain has been cut down and the debris dumped into the sea, making hundreds of acres of new land.

Incidentally, it is expected that conditions in the city will be improved by permitting a better circulation of air by the removal of the mountain, which formerly sheltered it from the prevailing winds of summer.

The work is being done by American engineers, and in the course of a year and a half new parks, boulevards and avenues will be established and ready for handsome residences which will be built.

The work is being done largely by hydraulic machinery, which washes the dirt away from the rocks and carries it down to the water. This same work was started by native workers some time ago and the effort made to move the mountain by means of mule carts, but was abandoned because of the great expense and time required.

The removal of debris by mule cart cost 75 cents per cubic yard and the work would require eight years, whereas the work is being done by modern machinery at a cost of 25 cents per cubic yard in eighteen months.

BRAVED BEAR IN DEN

If you had tracked a big bear to his den among mountain rocks and Bruin laughed at you and refused to come out and be killed, what would you do? Leave him to himself and look for him another day? Or would you crawl in after him, as Old Put crawled in on one memorable occasion and bearded a wolf in his lair. That is just what A. M. Johnson, a Chateaugay hunter did the other day, and he got his bear.

Johnson, with Ed Cooke, Jerry Mahoney and other Chateaugay men, was stalking deer in the woods near Chateaugay Lake, N. Y. Coming

upon tracks of a bear they abandoned their deer hunt to follow him. After a long trail they arrived at a naturally formed den in a rocky ledge. As the bear's tracks had ended there, they knew that the beast had taken refuge in the cave. How to get at the animal was the question. He showed no willingness to come out and let the hunters shoot him, nor did he promise to be a cordial host.

But Johnson was unwilling to leave without at least a sight of his game. So, holding his rifle in position for instant use, the hunter entered the den. He had not penetrated far before he caught sight of the animal. Recognition probably was mutual in the dim light of the cave, and Johnson took no chances of a warm welcome from the den's owner. He fired two shots in quick succession. One of them broke the bear's jaw.

Maddened with pain and rage the beast made a rush for the hunter, who backed out of the den as quickly as possible with the bear close upon him. As the animal appeared in the open the other hunters fired upon it, and a fusillade of bullets soon put it out of power to fight. The animal weighed 300 pounds.

OBSERVES FALL OF DAYLIGHT METEORITE

Norman MacL. Harris of the Canadian Department of Health writes to *Science* the following account of a phenomenon he observed while travelling by canoe on Lake Kipawa, Que., on Aug. 31 last:

"The day was particularly bright and cloudless, with a southerly wind blowing at about eight miles an hour. The time of the observation was 9.50 A.M., and the course of the canoe was almost directly south. The meteorite was suddenly seen to shoot across the course of the canoe from east to west, about 50 degrees above the horizon, and, as far as could be judged, between 200 and 300 feet above the surface of the lake. Its passage lasted approximately three seconds from the time that it was first noted a little to the left of the bow of the canoe. The general impression received was that of a brilliant Roman candle shooting across the sky, of a vivid copper-green color. The size of the incandescent head of the body appeared to be a trifle larger than a golf ball nearly three feet in length behind it and of a like color. In the wake of the body trailed a curling wreath of white vapor of considerable length which became quickly dissipated.

The flight of the meteor was accompanied by no detectable noise whatever, so that the other occupant of the canoe, whose gaze was directed elsewhere at the time, failed to see the occurrence. The body suddenly vanished about a hundred yards to the west about the original altitude, leaving a small cloud of white vapor behind that dissolved rapidly away. Although watch was kept on the surface of the lake beyond, no trace of a body falling into the water was noted. It is possible that either it was completely combusted at that moment, or it passed out of sight rapidly along its westerly course."



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SWEDEN HAS RICH FIND OF COPPER

A discovery of new mineral wealth in Sweden is announced by Director Axel Gavelin, head of the Government Geological Research Department, who has asked the Riksdag for an appropriation to cover the investigation of the newly found ore deposits.

These lie in Central Sweden, and consist of iron, zinc and copper ore. Mr. Gavelin does not give exact details as to the total size of these deposits, but he considers them extremely promising, and says that if further research fulfills his expectations, the copper find especially is valuable and will form a national asset.

The total iron ore deposits of Sweden already known are calculated to be nearly 1,400,000,000 tons, running an average of 60 per cent. iron, which is said to be over 23 per cent. more than the average for all iron ore mined in the rest of Europe, and is 16 per cent. more than the average for the world as a whole.

Although much of Sweden's iron ore is used for the domestic manufacture of iron and steel, the export is considerable.

LITTLE ADS

Write to Riker & King, Advertising Offices, 1133 Broadway, New York City, or 29 East Madison Street, Chicago, for particulars about advertising in this magazine.

AGENTS WANTED

AGENTS—Mason sold 18 Comet Sprayers and Auto-washers one Saturday. Profit \$2.50 each. Particulars free. Established 30 years. Rusler Co., 21A, Johnson, Ohio.

AGENTS—We have a 50-50 proposition on GUARANTEED toilet articles and household necessities, reasonably priced. Free particulars. Brown Chemical Co., Dept. 252, St. Louis, Mo.

LADIES do your own hemstitching and pleating; attachment fits any machine. \$2.50; buttonhole, \$8; hand embroidered, \$2.50. Agents wanted. E. Stephenson, 22 Quincy St., Chicago.

WIDE-AWAKE MAN to take charge of our local trade; \$8 to \$8 a day steady; no experience required; pay starts at once; write today. American Products Co., 7927 American Bldg., Cincinnati, O.

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LAND OPPORTUNITY—\$10 to \$50 down, starts you on 20, 40 or 80 acres near thriving city in lower Michigan. Balance on long time. Write today for big free booklet giving full information. SWIGART LAND CO., M-1268 First National Bank Bldg., Chicago.

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PERSONAL—Continued

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IF REALLY LONELY, write Betty Lee, Inc., 4254 Broadway, New York City. Send stamp. Don't forget to write!

IF LONESOME exchange jolly letters with beautiful ladies and wealthy gentlemen. Eva Moore, Box 908, Jacksonville, Fla. (Stamp).

WINTER in Florida, marry charming maiden worth \$80,000. Box 55, Oxford, Florida.

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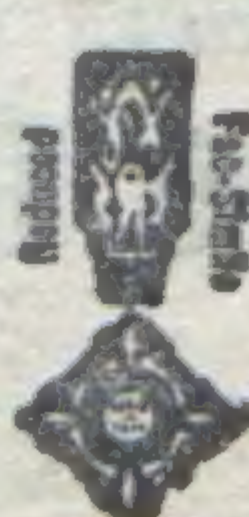
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